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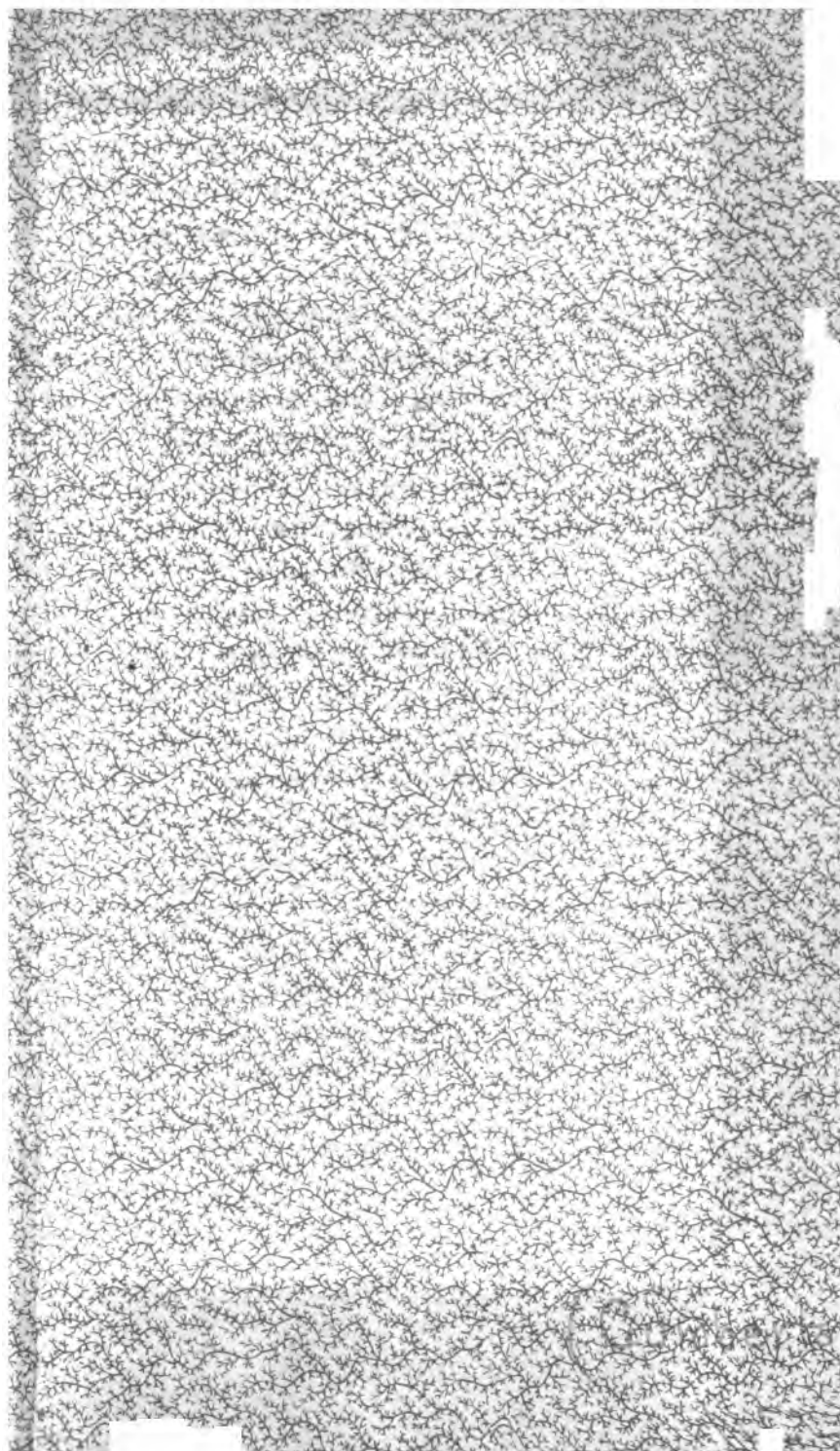
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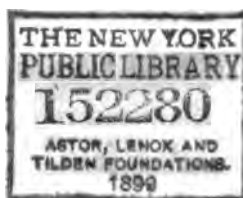
CALVARY;
OR,
THE DEATH OF CHRIST.
A
POEM
IN
EIGHT BOOKS.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

THIRD AMERICAN EDITION.

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1815.



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CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST BOOK.

After a short introduction, which states the miraculous acts of Christ to mark the period at which the Poem commences, Satan goes forth by night into the wilderness, and finds himself in the very place where he had in vain practised his temptations upon Christ: He falls into meditation upon that unsuccessful interview, and vents himself in soliloquy: Indignant under disappointment, and impatient for his defeat, he ascends to the summit of the mountain, from whence he had exhibited the kingdoms of the earth, and calls the Devil and all parts of the Heathen world: The whole host of Infernals assemble at his summons: The chief leaders are enumerated, their personal attributes described: Satan addresses them, and proposes the subject-matter for their consultation, namely, By what means to counteract the power of Christ upon earth: Baal delivers his sentiments by difficulties and objections, without any decided opinion, unless in the general: Moloch angrily resents what he considers pointed at himself, and speaks disdainfully against the proposition, as not only desperate, but disgraceful: Belial replies, after much circumlocution, suggests a temptation to be set on Mammon: He is interrupted by Satan, who reproves him for digressions in his speech, but adopts his hint of employing Mammon, and calls upon that evil spirit to attempt the fidelity of Judas Iscariot, whom he points out to him as the only one of the disciples open to seduction: Mammon at first affects to excuse himself from the undertaking, but in conclusion accepts it, and, taking wing in presence of the whole applauding host, sets out upon his embassy, direct course to the city of Jerusalem.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK I.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE DEVILS.

HAIL, awful CALVARY! forsaking now
Aonian haunts and the unhallow'd Nine,
I visit thy sad mount, and thence invite
The mournful echoes to my deep-ton'd harp,
Hymning the whilst, in solemn numbers, praise
To God for mercies purchas'd by the death
Of that mysterious Being, virgin-born,
Saviour of lost mankind, who on the cross,
Lord though he be of life, and one with God,
(In mortal pangs expir'd ; there to atone 10
For a degenerate world, by his pure blood
To wash original corruption out,
And, rising victor from the grave, dispel
Sin and its offspring Death, with all the train
(Of idol gods, usurping earth and heav'n.

Now had the wond'rous acts by Jesus wrought
Spread wide his fame thro' all Judea's realm ;
The leper cleans'd, the blind to sight restor'd,
The sick to health, and even the dead to life,
Tho' warn'd to silence, (for his modest ear 20

Sought not the praise of men) so much the more
Publish'd his mercies ; demons at his call
With horrid shrieks, that testified his power
Came forth from men possess'd, and fled ; his voice
Rebuk'd the seas and winds ; vast was the throng
That follow'd where he led, and thousands fed
In the waste wilderness mirac'ulous food :

They saw, they marvell'd, and of force confess'd
Messias in his power, not so in form ;

For there no comeliness, no outward grace,
No princely state appear'd : Slow to renounce
Illusions long indulg'd, their wavering mind
'Twixt two opinions halted, while in place

Of these bright visions they beheld a man
Lowly and meek, a houseless wanderer,
That had not where on earth to lay his head
Such can our Israel's great Restorer be,

Such our Messias ?—Thus their troubled thoughts
Like meeting currents clash'd ; when as he spake
Truth flow'd resistless from his lips, his eyes

Beam'd mercy, and his Father's glory shone
Effulgent in his face ; then every tongue
Was hush'd to silence, every doubt dispell'd
And every heart confess'd him Lord and Chri

'Twas night, when SATAN, prince of darkness
call'd,

(And fitly call'd, for evil hates the day,)
Walk'd forth on hellish meditation bent.

Prowling the wilderness : Where'er he trode -
 Earth quak'd beneath his foot ; before him 50
 roll'd

Thick cloud and vapour, making night's dark
 shade

More black and terrible ; the beasts of prey,
 Every wild thing that roams the savage waste
 (And howling to the moon demands its food,
 Fled his approach ; the lion and the pard
 Scented the blast and slunk into their dens ;
 For whilst his breast with raging passions boil'd
 Hatred, revenge and blasphemous despice,
 The sighs he vented from the hell within
 Breath'd death into the air ; his haggard eyes,
 Which still in speechless agonies he roll'd, 60
 Out-glar'd the hyæna's ; other fires than theirs
 To light his dismal path he needed none.

Now, having stretch'd athwart the sandy wild
 Clear to its rocky verge, the arch-fiend paus'd,
 And upward cast his eye, if haply there
 Darkling he might discern what saucy mound
 Dar'd to arrest his course ; for yet there dwelt
 Such vigor in his wing, nor depth, nor height,
 Mountains nor seas might check his bold career,
 Where he so purpos'd ; neither would he deign
 To ask one charitable star for light,
 Thoughtful of former glory, when he soar'd
 Son of the morning far above their spheres :

Whereat, he 'gain put forth his plumed ve
 From either shoulder stretch'd for flight, w
 soon

The fuel'd clouds to fierce encounter rush'd
 Loud thunders bellow'd, and the lightning's flash
 Smote on the craggy cliff ; at sight whereof
 Conscious that now he press'd the fatal spot
 Where late he commun'd with the Son of
 God,

Who for the space of forty days and nights
 Foil'd every vain device, with shame abash'd
 And pondering in his mind his foul defeat,
 Down, down at once his flagging pinions fell
 Close cower'd to his ribs : As some proud ship
 Between the tropics o'er the atlantic wave
 Speeding amain to reach her destin'd port,
 If chance the experienc'd mariner espies
 The gathering hurricane, no stay, no stop,
 Quick to the yard each swelling sail is furl'd,
 The curl'd waves whitening as the tempest
 drives,

And soon her taunt and lofty top-mast lower'd
 Strikes to the gale ; so he his towering height
 That to angelic stature now had swell'd,
 Shrunk into human size, nor other seem'd
 Than pilgrim squalid, and with years and toil
 Bending decrepit, when from his full heart
 Words, intermixt with groans, thus forc'd the
 way :—

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

9

"Yes, hateful wilderness, detested rocks,
Whom I would curse, had Nature left one blade
On your bare ribs, which cursing I might blast,
Full well I know you ; deep, too deep engrav'd
On mem'ry's tablet your rude horrors live.
And you, officious lightnings, hide your fires !
Come, Night, again ; let central darkness shroud
Scenes, whose tormenting recollection stabs
My unavenged soul. Can I forget
This Son of Joseph ? Son of God henceforth
Of force I must confess him ; for what less
Than godlike constancy could have with- 110
stood

Temptations great and terrible as mine ?
Something which man is not, he needs must be ;
Virtue, that angels boast not, he must have,
Else had my'snares inclosed him...else the world,
Which then was mine to give, had been a bribe
Too glorious not to dazzle every eye
But his, who made those glories what they are.
Still I must doubt the Father's love sincere,
Tho' loudly vouch'd by his own voice from
heav'n :

Is this a father's love, is this his care, 120
Here to expose him to this desart wild
Forty long sleepless nights and fasting days,
No angel-guard about him, lost, forlorn,
Abandon'd to the elements, to beasts

B

More fierce than this loud storm ; nay, fiercer
still,

To me than all more terrible, to me,

Foe of his life, inveterate and avow'd ?

Rare sample of God's love ! If here his CHRIS

Encounter'd aught of danger ; and if none,

What else could prompt him to this vain display

Of voluntary penance, but the love

Of flattery and a despicable wish

To hear himself applauded ? In this spot,

Beneath the jutting roof of this rude cliff,

I first surpris'd this wand'ring Son of God,

This Saviour of the world : Fainting he seem'd

With thirst and hunger, pale as death his cheek

His hollow eyes deep sunk, and from his brow

Big drops of sweat distill'd, as one o'erspent

And sinking to the earth, there to expire : 14

A ready tale he had for pity's ear,

A melancholy list of wants and woes ;

He had not tasted food, and fairly own'd

That nature's cravings were intense ; when I,

Glad at the heart to find him thus besieg'd

With appetite so eager, stooping down,

From the dissever'd fragments, that here lie

About the base of this storm-beating rock,

Chose out a few smooth stones, and tempting

said,

If thou art hungry, eat ; convert these stones.

If thou art God's own Son, to bread, and eat !
 But he, not so beguil'd, spurn'd them away,
 And silenc'd me with text of holy writ.
 A nobler appetite I next assail'd—
 Ambition ; to the mountain's top we soar'd ;
 I spread the kingdoms of the earth in sight,
 Fit sight to whet the hunger of the mind ;
 But mind and body he alike would starve,
 Nor thank nor homage render back for food
 Of my providing. One last hope remain'd ; 160
 Methought there was a godly pride about him,
 Which with right holy flattery I might win :
 Upon the temple's topmost pinnacle
 I plac'd this scorner of an earthly crown,
 And bade him be a God. Cast thyself down,
 Behold, quoth I, the angels are on wing
 To bear thee up unhurt. With stern rebuke,
 " Get thee behind me, SATAN !" he reply'd :
 Some power unseen control'd me, down I fell,
 Down from the giddy eminence I plung'd, 170
 And left him to his angels, whilst their hymns
 And hallelujahs echo'd through the air
 His triumphs and my second fall from heav'n.
 And now if dark despair shall reach this heart,
 Which of hell's tetrarch's can arraign their king,
 Or fix on me his share of public loss
 And overthrow sustain'd in this attack ?
 None, for none dare. If I, till now supreme,

Great idol of the Gentile world, for whom
So many groves, so many altars blaze ; 180
If I, to whom by various names ador'd
Thousands of temples rise, whilst one alone,
One solitary pile on Sion's hill
Echoes the praise of God, neglected else
Of all ; if I, if SATAN must submit
To CHRIST, revenge to patience, war to peace,
And men must learn new maxims of forgiveness,
Maxims I neither practice nor instil,
Heroes and kings and conquerors, farewell !
Greater is he who serves than he who reigns. 190
To suffer, to submit, to turn the cheek
To the proud smiter, these are virtues now ;
Hence with such virtues ! If these rules obtain,
If this tame doctrine shall unman the world,
Altars and groves and temples all must sink ;
Olympus and its synod, every Grace
And every Muse, all that the chissel wrought
In Greece or Rome, shall moulder into dust,
And CHRIST and *Reason* shall usurp the world."

He ceas'd, and now his swelling bosom heav'd
With indignation like the lab'ring earth,
Which subterranean vapors undermine,
Pent in its sulph'rous entrails : Up he sprung
To that high mountain-top whence he review'd
The kingdoms of the earth, whilst at his side
CHRIST's humble virtue stood, on other realms,

Realms of immortal happiness intent :
Here, as a vulture on the craggy peak
Of Caucasus or Hæmus left to watch,
Screams out his shrill alarm, at sound whereof
The carrion troop, upon the wing for prey,
Come flocking to the signal, SATAN thus
Stood eminent, and call'd his dark compeers ;
So loud he call'd that to the farthest bounds
Of Pagan isle or continent was heard
His voice re-echoing thro' the vault of heaven :

“ Heroes and demi-gods, Olympian powers,
Infernal princes of hell's dark abyss,
Heav'n's exiles, spirits of air, water, fire,
Or whatsoever element confines 220
Your incorporeal essences, Oh hear !
Hear and assemble ! 'tis your leader calls ;
It is your champion's voice, in happier hours
Heard and obey'd, now in extremest need,
Be present and assist our great divan.”

No more ; for soon was heard the distant sound
Of wings that beat the air ; from every point
Of the four winds the gathering swarm came on ;
From Crete, from Cyprus, and the Ionian coast,
From Egypt, Affric, and the Ausonian shores, 230
Gods of all names, dimensions and degrees.
Great was their sovereign's triumph to behold
This prompt obedience to his high command ;
For now, descending on the desert heath

To martial music, the infernal host,
In bands and columns, by their chiefs arrang'd,
Stood firm ; if ever gleam of joy might reach
Heart so accurs'd, th' arch-fiend had felt it here,
As with a monarch's eye he now review'd
His armies, covering all the swarthy plain. 240
Come, Muse, and to your suppliant's eyes impart
One ray of that pure light, which late you pour'd
On the dark orbs of your immortal Bard
Eclips'd by drop serene. Conduct me now,
Me from my better days of bold emprise
Far in decline, and with the hoary hand
Of Time hard stricken, yet adventuring forth
O'er Nature's limits into worlds unseen,
Peopled with shadowy forms and phantoms dire :
Oh ! bear me on your pinions in this void, 250
Where weary foot ne'er rested ; and behold !
All hell bursts forth : Support me, or I sink.

Now glimm'ring twilight streak'd the East-
ern sky,

For he, that on his forehead brings the morn,
Star-crown'd Phosphorus had heard the call,
And with the foremost stood. Beside him one
Of towering stature and majestic port,
Himself a host ; his black and curling locks
Down his herculean shoulders copious flow'd ;
In glittering brass upon his shield he bore 260
A kingly eagle, ensign of command,

BAAL his name, second to none in state
Save only his great chieftain, worshipp'd long
In Babylon, till Daniel drove him thence
With all his glutt'nous priests ; exalted since
High above all the idol gods of Greece,
Thron'd on Olympus, and his impious hand
Arm'd with the thunder ; yet he ru'd the zeal
Of furious Jehu, and that mournful day,
When he beheld his altars stream with blood, 270
His prophets and his priests by hundreds slain
Upon Mount Carmel. MOLOCH in the van,
Mail'd at all points for war, with spear and helm
And plumed crest and garments roll'd in blood,
Flam'd like a meteor : Him with horrid joy
SATAN awhile survey'd, then sighing cried,
" Oh ! worthy of command, had all like thee
So bravely fought, heav'n never had been lost."
Thence as he glanc'd his eye, far other form
And much unfit for war he next espied, 280
CHEMOS, the sin of Moab ; power obscene,
Emasculate and soft, in loose attire
A sensual deity ; his glory 'twas
In arts of base seduction to excel,
And, leagu'd with harlots, to have turn'd the heart
Of that wise king, and drawn him from his God
To bend his aged knees at idol shrines.
Close at his side stood one, in whose soft eyes
Ensnaring smiles and beauteous ruin lurk'd ;

Oh ! that such grace should be allied to sin ; 290
Zidonian goddess, ASHTORETH her name ;
Heav'n would not quite destroy so fair a work,
But wantonness usurp'd an angel's face,
And with her innocence had chang'd her sex.
Yet let that sex beware, for in their souls,
When once she enters, peace no longer dwells ;
Witness that Magdalen, whose frantic breast,
Till by CHRIST's mercy heal'd, sev'n demons rent,
All sin-begotten, all her brood accurst.
But SATAN, whose stern heart, stranger to love,
All weakness tho' in shape of sin disdain'd,
And only priz'd spirits more like himself,
Indignant turn'd aside, and bent his eye
Where DAGON, giant god, amidst the ranks,
Like Teneriff or Ætna, proudly tower'd :
DAGON, of Gath and Askelon the boast,
In that sad flight, when on Gilboa's mount
The shield of Saul was vilely thrown away,
And Israel's beauty perish'd : Him awhile,
With scowling eye, th' infernal king survey'd, 310
Then taunting cried, " O DAGON, vast in size,
In soul diminutive, had that huge mass
Valour proportionate, heav'n had been ours ;
But fitter thou, dull spirit, to people hell
Than re-assault God's throne. Where was thy
pride,
When overthrown in Gaza by the strength

Of that uxorious Danite? Humbled now
 I know thy nightly haunts, and how thou driv'st
 Wretches possess to hide themselves in tombs,
 Whence I beheld thee 'midst the herd unclean
 Scour down the steep and plunge into the sea."
 But now a fairer form arrests the eye
 Of hell's despotic lord; his radiant vest
 Of Tyrian purple, studded thick with gems,
 Flow'd graceful: He for courts was form'd...for
 feasts,

For ladies' chambers, and for am'rous sports;
 He lov'd not camps, nor the rude toils of war;
BELIAL his name; around his temples twin'd
 A wreath of roses, and, where'er he pass'd,
 His garments fann'd a breeze of rich perfume:
 No ear had he for the shrill-ton'd trump—
 Him the soft warble of the Lydian flute
 Delighted rather, the love-soothing harp,
 Sappho's loose song, and the Aonian maids
 And zoneless graces floating in the dance;
 Yet from his lips sweet eloquence distill'd,
 As honey from the bee; but still his voice
 Ne'er counsell'd ought but cunning and deceit,
 Mean truce and base capitulating terms;
 Therefore by **SATAN** held in slight account, 340
 For devils boast a dignity in sin.
 Last in the field, and from the rest apart,
 Was **MAMMON**! Cautious was his step and slow,

His eye still watchful to prevent surprise,
 Squalid his vesture and his locks uncomb'd ;
 For gain and usury engross'd his soul ;
 Nor other care had he but to amass
 Wealth unenjoy'd, and gloat upon his hoard :
 Had there been only happiness in heav'n
 And gold in hell, MAMMON had spurn'd the bliss,
 And hugg'd the treasure cheaply earn'd with
 pain.

His princes thus review'd, from the hill-top
 SATAN swift-glancing flew, and in the midst
 Rose like a meteor ; whereat all the host
 Sent up a general shout : he with his hand
 Give sign, and wheel'd the Stygian phalanx
 round ;

Horrible sight ! A theatre of fiends,
 And each the foe of man ; idols and imps,
 Wizards, familiars, sprites, phantasmas, dreams,
 Sorrows and pains and deaths in every shape 360
 Cover'd the blasted heath. Th' infernal king,
 Tho' in his heart by mut'nous passions torn,
 Thought clash'd with thought, and all was an-
 archy,

Yet, with assum'd composure, beck'ning forth
 His princes, whilst the inferior throng stood off,
 And mute attention reign'd, in few thus spake :

“ Friends and confederates, welcome ! for this
 proof

Of your affiance, thanks ! On every call,
Whether we need your counsel or your arms,
Joyful I see your ready zeal displays 370
Virtues, which hell itself cannot corrupt.

I mean not to declaim : The occasion told
Speaks its own import, and the time's dispatch
All waste of words forbids. God's Son on earth,
CHRIST, the reveal'd Messiah, how to oppose
Is now the question ; by what force, or power,
(Temptations have been tried, I name not them)
Or dark conspiracy, we may pull down
This Son of Righteousness from his bright
sphere,

Declare, who can : I pause for a reply." 380

Silence ensu'd, whilst every eye was turn'd
Instinctively on BAAL ; he of all
Hell's magi fill'd the seat of wisdom chief :
Experienc'd long in craft, and nothing apt
To give strait counsel, slow of speech he was ;
To hint, propound, dilate, and so entice
Other opinions forth, them to refute,
And thereon build his own, was all his art.
After long pause, and hesitation feign'd,
(Stale trick of orators,) he thus began :

“ Why thus on me, as I were worthy—me,
Lost being like yourselves, as I alone
Could compass this high argument—on me,
Least in your sapient conclave, why you point

These scrutinizing looks, I muse ; and, aw'd
By this your expectation, fain would shrink
From the great task to silence, had you not
O'er these poor faculties such full control,
As to put by all pleas, and call them forth
In heav'n or earth, or hell's profound abyss, 400
Yours in all uses, present at all hours.
Our kingly chief hath told us we are met
To combat CHRIST on earth : Be't so ! We yet
May try our fortune in another field ;
Worse fortune than in heav'n befel our arms,
Worse downfal than to hell, we cannot prove.
But with the scene our action too must change :
How ? To what warfare?...Circumvention, fraud,
Seduction ? These are earthly weapons ; these
As man to man opposes, so must we 410
To CHRIST incarnate. There be some, who cry,
Hence with such dastard arts ! War, open war !
I honor such bold counsellors, and yield
All that I can...my praise ; till one be found,
One that may rival God's own Son in power,
And miracle to miracle oppose :
More than my praise I cannot, my assent
I will not give ; 'twere madness : And how war
With God ? what arms may we employ
'gainst him, 420
Whose very prophets can call down heaven's
fires

Upon our priests and altars? For myself,
What powers I had I shall not soon forget;
What I have left I know, and for your use
Shall husband as I may, not vainly risque
Where they must surely fail. The Jews pretend
That CHRIST colludes with Beelzebub; the Jews
As far mistake my nature as my name.
The fallacy, O peers, confutes itself,
Forg'd to disparage CHRIST, not honor me.
Oh! that I had his wonder-working powers; 430
I'm not that fool to turn them on myself:
No, my brave friends, I've yet too much to lose;
Though Babylon's proud shrines are laid in
dust,
Rome's capitol survives, and thro' the world
Where'er her eagles fly, upon their wings
They bear my thunder and they spread my fame.
Therefore no more of Beelzebub and CHRIST;
No league, no compact can we hold together.
What then ensues? Despair? Perish the thought!
The brave renounce it, and the wise prevent; 440
You are both wise and brave. Our leader says
Temptations have been tried, and tried in vain,
Himself the tempter. Who will tread that
ground,
Where he was foil'd? For Adam a mere toy,
An apple serv'd; CHRIST is not brib'd by worlds:
So much the second Man exceeds the first

In strength and glory. But tho' CHRIST himself
 Will not be tempted, those who hear him may :
 Jews may be urg'd to envy, to revenge,
 To murder ; a rebellious race of old ! 450
 To kill a prophet or betray his God
 What Jew was ever found to need the spur ?
 Wist ye not what a train this preacher hath,
 What followers, what disciples. These are men,
 Mere men, frail sons of Adam, born in sin.
 Here is our hope. I leave it to your thoughts."

He ceas'd ; but neither murmur nor applause
 Follow'd his speech : For MOLOCH, whose fell
 heart

Ill stomach'd this tame counsel, least of all
 Taunts thinly cover'd under mask of praise, 460
 Sprung forth impetuous, and with scowling brow
 And accent acrimonious, thus reply'd :

" My thoughts, it seems, are known before I
 speak ;

War, open war is all my note : I rise
 To thank the prophet, who thus reads my heart,
 Where honesty should wear it—in my face ;
 That face from danger I did never hide,
 How then from him ? Nor am I by his praise
 More honor'd than by his dissenting voice :
 For whilst he counsels circumvention, fraud,
 Seduction—(if my memory wrongs his words
 I yield it to correction)—we stand off,

Wide as the poles apart. Much I had hop'd
When the great tempter fail'd, and in your ears
Sung his own honor's dirge, we had heard the
last

Of plots and mean temptations; mean I call
them,

For great names cannot sanctify mean deeds :
SATAN himself knows I oppos'd th' attempt,
Appeal'd, protested ; my thrice honor'd chief
Knows it full well, and blushes for th' event. 480

And are we now caballing how to outwit
A few poor, harmless fishermen, (for such
Are CHRIST's disciples)—how to gull and cheat
Their simple hearts of honesty? Oh peers,
For shame, if not for pity, leave them that,
That beggar's virtue : And is this the theme,
The mighty theme, which now employs the
thoughts

Of your immortal synod? Shame, Oh shame!
Princes, dominions, arch-angelic thrones,
Imperial lords! these were your titles once; 490
By these names ye were known above the stars;
Shame not your ancient dignities, nor sink
Beneath the vilest of the sons of men,
Whisperers, informers, spies. If CHRIST be
God,

Fight, as becometh you to fight, with God :
If man, (and sure his birth bespeaks no more,)

Why all this preparation, this consult,
These mighty machinations and cabals ?
Off with your foe at once, dismiss him hence
Where all his brother prophets have been 500
sent ;

Where his precursor John has gone before,
Whose voice still echoes thro' this wilderness :
“ Repent ye, for God's kingdom is at hand !
“ Prepare ye the Lord's way ! ”—It is prepar'd ;
It leads to death—it marshals him the road
To that oblivious bourne, whence none return :
Herod yet lives ; another royal feast,
Another wanton dance, and he, for whom
So many innocents were slain, shall fall.
Once vanquish'd, are we therefore to despair ?
In heav'n unequal battle we provok'd ;
Tho' vast our host, the million was with God.
On earth inquire of all the nations round
Whom they will serve, with one voice they reply,
We are their gods ; they feed us with their
blood,
Their sons and daughters they make pass
through fire
To do us grace ; if their own flesh they give,
Shall they withhold to sacrifice a foe ?
Twelve tribes were all Jehovah had on earth,
And ten are lost ; of this small remnant, few
And wretched are the friends that league with
Heav'n.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

25

And where is now CHRIST's promis'd reign on
earth ?

When God's own servants rise against his Son,
And those, to whom the promises were giv'n,
Revolt from their Messiah, can we wish
Greater revenge ? What need have we to tempt
Those, who have hearts rebellious as our own,
As prompt to malice, no less prone to vex
God's righteous spirit ? And let come what
may,

It comes not to our loss...rather our gain. 530
Let God arise to vengeance ; let him pour
Destruction on his temple, whose proud height
Our chief can witness, measur'd by his fall :
Let him not leave one stone upon another,
As his rash Son hath menac'd ; let his wrath
Thro' all the inhospitable earth disperse
His scatter'd tribes ; such ever be the fate
Of all his worshippers ! May scorn, contempt,
Derision be their lot, and may their God
Never recal his curse ! Are we, O peers, 540
To mourn for his Jerusalem ? Our joy
Springs from confusion ; enmity 'twixt God
And man is our best triumph : For myself,
War is my harvest ; then my altars blaze
Brightest, when human victims feed the flame."
Breathless, he paus'd ; so rapid was the pulse
Of his high-beating heart, he stood as one

D

Choak'd and convuls'd with rage ; when, as he
ceas'd,

He smote his mailed habergeon so loud,
Hell's arm'd legions heard, and shook their 550
spears

Betok'ning war. Frowning, he look'd around,
Whilst from his fiery eyes such terror glanc'd.
It seem'd as if his pride meant to abash
And silence all opposers. Yet not long
His triumph ; for now BELIAL from the ranks
Graceful advanc'd, and as he put aside
His purple robe in act to speak, the throng
(Such was the dazzling beauty of his form)
Fell back a space ; then stood all eyes and ears
In expectation mute as death. Though hell 560
Own'd not a spirit more false, sensual, and base,
Yet ever as he spake such action grac'd
His words, so musically soft they flow'd,
Who most despis'd the pleader prais'd the
speech.

When thus, with mild, insinuating looks,
Masking his ranc'rous heart, the fiend began :

“ After so many peaceful ages past,
Since first emerging from hell's dark abyss,
Rous'd by our arch-angelic chief, we sprung
Up to this middle region, and here seiz'd 570
On this terrestrial globe, created first
For man, our vassal now, where, at full ease,

Lords of the elements and gods ador'd,
 We reign and revel, undisturb'd of Heav'n.
 If God, whose jealousy be sure ill brooks
 That this fair world should be so long possess'd
 Of us, his exil'd angels, and his name,
 Pent up in Palestine, should now arouse
 His slumb'ring wrath, and his best strength put
 forth

To wrestle for lost empire, and our earth, 580
 As we in evil hour his heav'n, assail,
 Who of this mighty synod but must own
 The provocation warrants the retort?
 If, then, the Maker of mankind hath cause
 To meditate their rescue, we no less
 Have cause to oppose th' attempt, and hold them
 fast

To their allegiance in despite of heav'n.
 Much, then, we owe to our great leader's care,
 Which, ever watchful o'er the public weal,
 Calls us to this full council, here to meet 590
 In grave consult how best we may repair
 Past disappointments, and repel th' spite
 Of this new Champion, levell'd at our shrines.
 Great is the trouble of my thoughts, O peers,
 And much perplex'd am I with doubts, what
 name,

Nature, and office to ascribe to CHRIST ;
 In form, the lowliest of the sons of men ;

In miracles, omnipotent as God ;
Whose voice controls the stoutest of our host,
Bids the graves open, and their dead come forth ;
Whose very touch is health ; who with a glance
Pervades each heart, absolves it, or condemns ;
Whose virgin birth credulity scarce owns,
And nature disavows. Prais'd to all time,
Immortal as himself be the renown
Of that wise spirit, who shall devise the means,
By force or fraud, to overthrow the power
Of this mysterious foe—what shall I say ?—
Priest, Prophet, King, Messias, Son of God ?
Yet how God's unity, which well we know 610
Endures no second, should adopt a Son,
And essence indivisible divide,
Baffles my weak conjecture : Let that pass !
To such hard doctrines I subscribe no faith :
I'll call him man inspir'd, and wait till death
Gives sentence of mortality upon him.
Meanwhile let circumspection on our part
Fill all the anxious interim ; alarm,
Rome's jealousy, stir up the captious spleen
Of the proud Pharisee, beset him round 620
With snares to catch him, urge the envious
priests,
For envy still beneath the altar lurks,
And note the man he trusts. MAMMON could tell,
Though MAMMON boasts not of his own success,

How few of human mould have yet withstood
His glittering, golden lures. The sword can kill
Man's body ; gold destroys his very soul :
Yet mark me well, I counsel not to tempt
The Master ; poverty can do no more
Than his own mortifying penance does ; 630
Hunger and thirst and obstinately starve,
When his mere wish could make the rock a
spring

And its hard fragments bread. Yet sure I am
All are not CHRIST's in heart, who with their lips
Confess him ; these are men, and therefore frail,
Frail and corruptible. And let none say,
Fear prompts this counsel ; I disclaim all fear
But for the general cause. In every heart
Nature hath built my altar ; every sect,
Nation, and language, with one voice, confess
Pleasure the sovereign good. The Stoic churl,
The dogged Cynic snarling in his tub,
And all the ragged moralizing crew,
Are hypocrites ; philosophy itself
Is but my votary beneath a cloak.
It harms not me, though every idol god
Were tumbled from his base ; alike I scorn
Sampson's strong nerve and Daniel's flaming
zeal.

And let CHRIST preach his mortifying rules :
Let him go forth through all the Gentile world,

And, on the ruin of our fanes, erect
 His church triumphant o'er the gates of hell,
 Still, still man's heart will draw the secret sigh
 For pleasures unenjoy'd ; the gloomy cell
 And melancholy fast...the midnight prayer,
 And pale contrition weeping o'er her lamp,
 Are penances, from which the sense revolts—
 Fines, that compounding superstition pays
 For pleasures past, or bribes for more to come."

" Enough of this vain boast," here SATAN
 cry'd ; 660

" More than enough of these voluptuous strains,
 Which, though they lull the ear, disarm the soul
 Of its best attribute. Not gaudy flowers
 Are cull'd for med'cine, but the humble weed ;
 True wisdom, ever frugal of her speech,
 Gives sage advice in plain and homely words.
 The sum of all our reasoning ends in this,
 That nothing but the death of CHRIST can solve
 The myst'ry of his nature ; till he falls
 Scarce can I say we stand : All voices, then, 670
 Tho' varying in the means, conspire his death ;
 Some cautiously as BAAL ; some with zeal
 Precipitate as MOLOCH, whose swift thought
 Vaults over all impediments to seize
 The goal of his ambition. But, O peers,
 Ours is no trivial care ; direct your sight
 Along the ranks of that redeemed host—

On us hangs all their safety. Night and day
My anxious thoughts are lab'ring in their cause,
And whilst CHRIST walks the earth I take 680
no rest,

A watchful spy forever at his side,
Noting each word and deed ; sometimes I mix
With the selected Twelve that page his steps ;
Of these, though some have waver'd, none is false
Save one alone, ISCARIOT he by name ;
The taint of avarice hath touch'd his heart ;
I've mark'd him for my own. Hear, princes,
hear !

This night the priests and elders will convene
Their secret conclave : I am in their hearts ;
Burning with envy, malice, and revenge, 690
Their only thought is how to tangle CHRIST,
In whom of force I own no guile is found,
But gentleness instead and perfect truth...
A lamb in nature, without spot and pure...
Fit victim therefore for their paschal rites,
Which now are near at hand ; apt is the hour,
Apt are the instruments. What now remains
But to send forth a tempter to persuade
ISCARIOT to betray his Master's life,
And damn himself for gold? Speak, is there one,
One in this patriot circle, whom all eyes
Point out for this emprise ? Most sure there is :
BELIAL hath well predicted of our choice :

MAMMON, stand forth ! on thee th' election
lights."

He spake, and all approv'd ; for choice so fit
None could oppose ; when MAMMON thus reply'd :

" Prince of this world ! to whom these armies
owe,

(Lost but for thee in everlasting night,)
The glorious prospect of yon rising sun,
'Tis not to evade the labour, but prevent 710

The failure of your hopes, that I beseech
Your wisdom to correct its choice, and lodge
This arduous embassy in abler hands :

Nathless, if such your will, and my compeers
Adjudge me to this service, I submit :

In me is no repugnance, no delay ;

For ever what these toiling hands could do,
Or patient thoughts devise, that I have done ;

Whether in heaven ordain'd to undermine
God's adamant throne, or doom'd to dig 720
The solid sulphur of hell's burning soil, [else
Fearless I wrought ; and, were there no tongues
To vouch my services, these scars would speak.

How many daintier spirits do I see

Fair as in heav'n, and in fresh bloom of youth,
Whilst I, with shrivell'd sinews cramp't and
scorch'd

'Midst pestilential damps and fiery blasts,
Drag, as you see, a miserable load,

39

“Go, then,” exclaim'd th' arch enemy of man,
“Go, brave adventurer, go where glory calls :
Auspicious thoughts engender in my breast,
And now prophetic visions burst upon me ;

E

I see the traitor JUDAS with a band
Of midnight ruffians seize his peaceful Lord :
They drag him to the bar, accuse, condemn ;
He bleeds, he dies ! Darkness involves the rest.
Ascend the air, brave spirit, and 'midst the shout
Of grateful myriads wing thy course to fame."

He said, and, pointing to the sacred towers
Of God's high temple, wav'd his scepter'd hand ;
Whereat the infernal armies gave a shout
That shook the rocky desert to its base.
Meanwhile the fiend, ambassador of hell,
Exulting, heard his high election crown'd
With their applauding voices, and the call
Of his great chieftain echo'd to the skies. [now
Pride swell'd his conscious breast ; no longer
Crouching with age and pain, but nerv'd anew,
As with a spell transform'd, erect he stood
With tow'ring stature tallest of the throng,
And looks of high supremacy and state.
And now from either shoulder he unfurl'd
His wide-stretch'd pinions, and uprising swift
Tower'd in mid-air ; the host with loud acclaim
Hail'd his ascent ; he on the well-pois'd wing
Hover'd awhile, till, from his cloudy height,
Sweeping the wide horizon, he descried, 780
Far in the west, the holy city of God,
His destin'd port, then to the orient sun [speed.
Turn'd his broad vans, and ply'd their utmost

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND BOOK.

Mammon, alighting on the Holy Mount, assumes the form and character of a Levite, and under that appearance goes in search of Judas Iscariot. He meets that disciple most opportunely for his purpose in a solitary place, and, entering into conversation with him, pretends a commission from the priests and elders for engaging him in their service, with a promise of a reward, and urges many insidious arguments for detaching him from his Master : They separate with a promise on the part of Judas to report his final answer to the priests that evening. Christ is now brought to view sitting in the midst of his disciples at his Last Supper : He addresses them in those solemn and affecting terms recorded in the Gospel of Saint John, washes their feet, foretels his death, and points out to them his betrayer in the person of Judas, then present : The traitor, perceiving himself discovered, hastily departs. Christ, pitying the affliction of his disciples, tenderly consoles them with the promise of his support under their future tribulations, and concludes with an awful invocation to the Father in their behalf ; whereupon, warning them that his hour is come, he goes forth to the garden. A reflection naturally springing from the subject, addressed to unbelievers, closes the book.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK II.

THE LAST SUPPER.

NOW, on the consecrated Mount of God,
MAMMON, invisible to mortal eye,
Stooping the wing from his aerial height,
With feet unhallow'd, lands ; a direful pest,
Farthest from heav'n of all that out-cast crew
Who fell from bliss ; fit messenger was he,
And fatal was their choice who sent him forth
To work corruption's purpose in man's heart ;
For in his pow'r excelling, he can take
The semblance of each virtue, shift each form,
And turn and turn new faces on the world,
Till he hath snar'd a soul ; then he appears
In nature as he is, loathsome, obscene,
Rapacious as those filthy monsters feign'd
By fabling poets of amphibious breed,
Harpies, of earth and ocean the foul spawn,
Half brute, half human, with cadav'rous face
Horribly pale, and hollow, hungry eye,
Glaring aghast, with wings outstretch'd to chace,
And talons crook'd to pounce their mangled prey.

And now, by dev'lish spell transform'd, he seems
A reverend Levite, bearded to the waist ;
Hypocrisy ne'er wore a graver mask :
And still with wolf-like watch he prowls around
If haply in those haunts he might surprise
Occasion to put forth his damning arts,
And, from the flock of their good Shepherd, cull
One tainted straggler—one, whose sordid soul
Av'rice might tempt to take the price of blood,
And sacrifice the Son of God for gold : 30
Of CHRIST no care had he, but to elude
His vigilance, which still was all his dread ;
Nor of the Twelve, save JUDAS, was there one
Whom to assail ; on him alone, on him,
Son of perdition, rested all the hopes
Of SATAN and his legions. Now the fiend
With ineffectual search had coasted all
The sacred region round, and in the shade
Beneath the temple porch awhile repos'd,
List'ning the converse of the idle crowd, 40
The sun then high at noon ; and much they talk'd
Of CHRIST and his great miracles, of some
Elias deem'd, of some the Baptist John
Ris'n from the dead, but by all tongues confess
A prophet mighty both in word and deed.
Silent the whilst, in secret musings wrapt,
The wizard spirit stood, when all at once
Loud voices strike his ear, and straight comes one

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 39

Leaping and bounding 'midst the shouting
throng,

A cripple new restor'd ; the very bed, [press'd,
Which from his birth the palsied wretch had
Now in its turn was carried, and to all
Triumphantly expos'd. "Behold," he cry'd,
"The token of my cure ; I am the man
Whom ye all knew, and this the doleful bed
On which, fast bound in misery and pain,
Helpless before your' charitable gates
I laid and begg'd for pity and relief : [limbs
Lo ! I am free ! Mark how these new-found
Nimble the health-restoring voice obey ! 60
CHRIST gave the word ; he spake and I am whole."

This whilst he heard, conviction smote the
fiend ;

His conscious heart a sudden tremor seiz'd,
And off he slunk abash'd. A winding path
Led down the mount, and here, as he pursu'd
In gloomy thought the solitary way,
Behold by happy chance the man he sought,
ISCARIOT, and alone : Joy flush'd the cheek
Of the incarnate dæmon, thus to find
His labour in auspicious moment crown'd. 70

"Hail, son of Simon ! peace be to thee, friend !
Fairly encounter'd art thou in good hour,"
The priest-like tempter cried : "thy worth is
known

To all our Levites, from whose tribe I come
 With friendly greeting charg'd. This night
 they meet

In special conclave ; our chief pontiff there
 Will, in the holy convocation, move
 Points of high import to our ancient law—
 Questions it much importeth thee to hear,
 And well accepted shalt thou be of all, 80
 Who, with large recompense and honours due,
 Will greet thee so complying : I have said."

" Grave Sir, I know thee not," JUDAS reply'd :
 " Yet for thy greeting, thanks, and peace for
 peace,

As holy men becomes." To him the fiend—

" Unknown I well may be, who, night and day
 Serving God's altar, rarely stir abroad,
 And little commerce hold with this great world ;
 But thee I know, one of that Teacher's train,
 Who walks at large, nor shuns the haunts im-
 pure 90

Of sinners and of publicans. Alas !
 That one of thy wise bearing should be seen
 In such base fellowship, paging his steps,
 Calling him Lord and Master, whom the world
 In mere derision suffers to grow up
 To full-blown vanity, at once to crush.
 But good report is pregnant with thy name,
 As one exempted from the general scorn ;

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

And sure I am thou wilt not so abase
And turn thy nobler thoughts to one so mean,
Vile and mechanic ; to the driv'ling crew
Of children and of women leave that task—
To Peter and his brethren of the net ;
Finereas'ning we shall have, and well be school'd
When fishermen turn preachers, and instil
Doctrines and laws, which Moses never taught,
Woe to our scribes ! Rare mock'ry of the world
And the world's wisdom, if these simple folk,
Lur'd from their daily drudgery, should set up
Fishers of men ; the synagogue, to them 110
A barren element, will never yield
Such gainful earnings as the sea affords.
And what is CHRIST that JUDAS so should court
His starving service ? What so tempting lure
Hath this deceiver to beguile thy hopes ?
“ Not of this world my kingdom,” he hath said ;
Yet of this world are we ; in this alone
We live and move ; here only we expect
Or pain or pleasure ; all that lies beyond
In the unknown abyss is dark as death. 120
And wherefore carriest thou that bag about ?
A beggar needs no treasurer, and thy Lord
Feeds but by miracle. Alas for him,
Who serves a master, that keeps Sabbath fasts
Forty long days in the bare wilderness—
Makes poverty his passport into heav'n,

And bids us throw away life's present means
For doubtful chance of interest after life !

And art thou of all reason so bereft

As to account prosperity a crime, 130

Or think none blest but him, whose every step
Thro' mis'ry's thorny path is mark'd with blood?

O son of Simon, take thy last resolve :

Either resign thy body to the worm,

And die with CHRIST, or him renounce, and live
Rich, honor'd, prosp'rous, and enjoy the world."

The fiend now paus'd, well pleas'd that he had
gain'd

Audience so large ; when JUDAS, in whose soul
The pois'nous instillation 'gan to work,

Thus to corruption's advocate replied : 140

" That CHRIST, rejected and despis'd of men,
Hath in this world no part, I freely grant ;

Therefore if we his followers who renounce

Things present, build our hopes upon a dream
Of what shall never come, we are of all

Most miserable ; if we, who bid farewell

To all that nature holds most dear, to share

Sorrows and pains and poverty with CHRIST,

Find not those blissful mansions in the heav'n

Which he hath promis'd ; if, when all is past, 150

And this sad scene concludes, no reck'ning
comes,

No grateful compensation after death,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

13

Hard is our fate, and much hath he abus'd
Our weak credulity. But still these hopes
Of an expected glory, though with doubt
And darkness clouded, faint, not yet extinct,
Yield not to words ; words made them what
they are— [him.

CHRIST's words ; and surely man ne'er spake like
Wherefore if these your doctors of the law
Invite me to their conclave but to hear 160
A railing accusation, I hold off
From their assembly, and to CHRIST adhere,
As to the better reas'ner ; and though poor
The servant, equal is the Master's lot,
Poor as the poorest, houseless and forlorn,
A man of sorrows ; nor can we complain,
Whilst he of all we suffer still partakes,
First in all labors, penances, and pangs.
You ask, and bid me take my last resolve,
If I will give this body to the worm 170
And die with CHRIST : To die is nature's dread ;
Instinctively she loaths the gloomy grave,
And turns a longing eye to light and life,
But fortune gives to all things their degrees ;
To them, who bask in sunshine thro' the day,
Night comes with double sadness, whilst to me,
Who toil from morn to noon, from noon to eve,
Yet nothing but a dim horizon see
Low'ring in clouds, darkness is nothing strange,

Nor death a terror. Wealth presents no dower
 To wed me to the world ; no pleasures cling
 Around my heart ; no soft affections woo
 My longer stay on earth, there to prefer
 Brief joys possess'd, to hope of future bliss."

Thus whilst he 'plain'd, the subtle tempter's
 ear

Caught the soft murmur that betrays the soul :
 The sigh capitulating virtue breathes,
 When from her last defences she retreats ;
 Whereat a bolder tone he now assum'd,
 And thus the wav'ring, false disciple ply'd: 190

" All joys that gold can purchase wait your
 choice ;

Rich to your heart's ambition you shall be ;
 Nor only rich, but rescu'd from a doom
 So dreadful, had you all the wealth in store,
 Which the sea covers or the earth contains,
 'Twere well bestow'd to purchase your redemp-
 tion.

[meet

With CHRIST impending death...with me you
 Life with encircling pleasures. Throw aside
 That beggar's purse ; your starving office spurn ;
 Serve God's high priest, whose treasury is full ;
 Cast those few mites away, the scanty dole
 Of some contaminating leper's hand,
 For which you bid God heal him and pass on ;
 Whilst he, good cred'lous soul, cries out amain,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

42

As powerful fancy works, "Lo! I am clean ;
Behold a miracle !" — But gold performs
Greater and happier miracles than this :
Gold with a touch can heal the mind's disease,
Quicken the slow-pac'd blood, and make it dance
In tides of rapture thro' each thrilling vein ; 210
Cast out that worst of dæmons, poverty,
And with a spell exorcise the sad heart,
Haunted with spectres of despair and spleen.
If, then, this prize can tempt thee—if thy soul
Still thirsts for life, for riches, for repose ;
If in thy breast there dwells that manly scorn,
Which slighted merit feels, when envious pride
Thrusts it aside to build the unworthy up,
Now, now assert it ; from a Master turn,
Who turns from thee—who before thee exalts
Thy meaner brethren, Peter, James, and John :
On them his partial smile forever beams—
They have his love, his confidence, his heart :
Of them revolting he might well complain—
Of thee he cannot ; thine were just revenge :
He is no traitor, who resents a wrong ;
Who shares no confidence can break no trust.
Bid conscience, then, be still ; let no weak qualms
Damp thy reviving spirit ; but when night
Wraps her dark curtain round this busy world,
Come thou to CAIAPHAS ; there will be found
Our priests and scribes in council to attain

And bring to judgment this presumptuous man,
Who boasts himself Messiah, Son of God.
If thou, to whom his midnight haunts are known,
His secret incantations and his spells,
By which he does those feats that cheat our sight,
Wilt to those guilty haunts conduct our guard,
And render up his person to the law,
Much praise and large reward shalt thou receive.
If thou wilt not—But wherefore should I doubt?
I would persuade, not threaten : Know withal
It is not thou, 'tis justice gives the blow ;
The law will have its victim. Thinkest thou
That we, to whom the custody is giv'n
Of God's prophetic oracles, ordain'd
To guard his worship, and expound his laws,
Will let this innovating Teacher spurn
Our holy order, mock our ancient rites,
Profane our Sabbaths, and himself exalt, 250
Co-equal with Jehovah, to confound
His unity, and claim divided power ?
No, let death arbitrate 'twixt him and us ;
If he be very CHRIS'T, death shall not dare
To aim his dart at immortality ;
His incorruption shall defy the grave—
If man, blaspheming man, he justly dies.
Living or dying, thus his fate dispels
All mystery ; truth starts of force to light,
And God is glorified in either case. 260

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

47

He ceas'd, and on the traitor fix'd a look,
Which, like the serpent's fascinating eye,
Gaz'd motion's power away ; sullen he stood,
As with a spell entranc'd ; the awful sense
Of his great Master's virtue, and the dread
Of an hereafter terrible to thought,
No longer serv'd to hold the wizard fiend
And his fell arts at bay. The word of truth,
Sown on the surface of his stony heart,
Had perish'd without root ; religion's lamp, 270
Faint and more faint as MAMMON'S crafty breath
Blew up the storm of passion, now expir'd
In his benighted soul ; there rankling pride,
Malicious envy, av'rice and revenge,
Leagu'd with hell's minister, and uncontrol'd,
Their impious orgies held. At length the wretch,
To calm, deliberate treachery resign'd,
With all th' unrighteous Mammon in his heart
And vile prevarication on his lips,
Thus with consent, in dubious phrase imply'd,
The grand seducer of mankind dismiss'd :

“ Great is the peril of th' attempt you urge,
For great the power of him you would destroy.
Therefore if I demand some pause for thought,
Deem it not much. Your offers shall be weigh'd ;
But now no more. Occasions call me hence,
This night the Master hath convok'd the Twelve
To keep the sacred feast, ordain'd of God

With bread unleaven'd and the Paschal Lamb.
 Thither, tho' last and in his favor least, 290
 I go a cited guest. There whilst I sit
 Unnotic'd at his table's lowest foot,
 My meditations shall recal your words,
 And ponder them apart. Say to your priests,
 Those conservators of our ancient law,
 This night they may expect my last resolve.
 And now behold the length'ning shadow marks
 The ev'ning hour, that warns me hence : Fare-
 wel !"

This said, their conf'rence ended, they embrace
 As friends, who plight their faith. Upon 300
 the touch,

So quick the infection ran...so dire the blight,
 The pois'nous ferment on the instant reach'd
 ISCARIOT's tainted heart, and now he burnt
 With the fell lust of gold. Joy seiz'd the fiend ;
 For well he knew how mortal to the soul
 That deadly aconite, the growth of hell.

Oh ! wretch forever lost, forever curst, [wake
 Whom MAMMON thus embraces ! Who shall
 Thy conscience from its lethargy ? Who now
 Shall stop the courses of that baneful drug, 340
 And stem the swift destruction ? 'Tis too late :
 Better for thee hadst thou ne'er seen the light,
 Or lost it ere this fatal hour had birth.
 Thy doom is seal'd ; hell hath its hour of joy,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

49

Thou traitor, an eternity of woe :
The meditation of thy heart shall hurl
Thee to perdition and thy Lord to death.
Now JUDAS down the mountain turn'd his steps ;
Not so the tempter ; he from the high rock,
Exalted where he stood, his impious eye 320
Glanc'd o'er the city of God, full in his view
From east to west in moony crescent stretch'd.
Here yet JEHOVAH was ador'd, here reign'd ;
All else to SATAN and his idol gods [names
Thro' earth's wide range belong'd ; to their dire
Each temple echo'd...ev'ry knee was bow'd.
How oft, e'en here, upon his holy hill,
Did Judah's kings with their polluted groves
Affront God's house, and pagan altars raise
To Chemos, Milcom, Ashtoreth, and all 330
The host of heav'n, within his sacred courts !
Witness that impious king, who pass'd his son
Through fire to Moloch, homicidal god,
Which rous'd th' Almighty's vengeance, and
entail'd
Mournful captivity on all his race.
Hither, as to the delug'd world of old,
In promis'd time, the dove of peace was sent ;
Upon this Ararat, his sacred mount,
He rested ; hence salvation dawn'd on man.
Him to destroy the tempter now aspir'd, 340
Secure of his new convert firmly leagu'd

In his dire plot and to perdition seal'd.
Nor rested on that mount the darkling fiend,
Nor further need had he of priestly garb,
Than till he saw ISCARIOT join the train
Of CHRIST and his disciples ; then at once
To his own airy properties dissolv'd,
A spirit invisible, with eager speed
To hell's assembled chiefs he wing'd his flight.

The sun had sunk beneath the western hills,
And now at ev'ning hour the Jews prepare
To celebrate their Passover, ordain'd
T' eternize their deliv'rance, when God's wrath
Smote every first-born male in Misraim's coast,
Save where the blood of lamb piacular,
Sprinkling the consecrated door, was found
Of the destroying angel. To this feast,
Prelusive of his own pure sacrifice
And type of his blood-shedding, JESUS came ;
The guests were present and the table spread ;
With loins begirt, as men upon the march,
And staff in hand, they snatch a hasty meal :
This done, in pensive meditation wrapt,
The Saviour, conscious of impending death,
Sate in the midst ; to his all-present mind
The treason and the traitor stood confest.
Low'ring abash'd, and from the rest apart,
ISCARIOT at the table's lowest foot [glance,
Took post, where best he might escape that

From whose intelligence no heart could hide
 Its guilty meditations. All eyes else
 Were center'd on the Saviour's face divine,
 Which, with the brightness of the Godhead,
 Mix'd traces of human sorrow, and display'd
 The workings of a mind, where mercy seem'd
 Struggling to reconcile some mortal wrong
 To pardon and forbearance. Such a look
 Made silence sacred...every tongue was mute ;
 E'en PETER's zeal forbore the vent of words,
 Or spent itself in murmurs half suppress. 380
 At length the meek REDEEMER rais'd his eyes,
 Where gentle resignation, temp'ring grief,
 Beam'd grace ineffable on all around,
 And with these words the awful silence broke :
 " Muse not if I am sad, nor stand aghast
 As doubtful of my constancy. These pangs,
 And more which I must suffer, were foreseen ;
 The hour now coming, comes not by surprise...
 It is the consummation of my charge,
 And fills the measure of atonement up. 390
 Shall I then say, Father, avert this hour ?
 And save me from these agonies ? Not so.
 With heart prepar'd to suffer and submit
 I meet my doom forewarn'd. Yet ere we part
 Take this last office from your Master's hands ;
 And when you see me stoop to wash your feet,
 As soon you shall, remember 'tis your Lord,

Your dying Lord this Legacy bequeaths,
And edify by his humility."

This said, his seamless mantle he threw off,
And girt his tunic close about his waist;
And with mute amazement they beheld
The Son of God, in servant-like attire,
Prepar'd to execute his menial task.
All gaz'd, all wonder'd, but no voice oppos'd;
None dar'd to pray forbearance of the deed,
Till he, whose heart was ever on his lips,
PETER, in warm expostulation cry'd:

"Lord, doest thou wash my feet, thy servant's
feet,

Mean as the dust he treads on? Never, Lord,
Never shalt thou do that for one so vile,
So all-unworthy: That be far from thee!
Such homage ill beseemeth thee to pay...
Me to receive."—To him the Lord replied:

"PETER, as yet thou know'st not what I do—
Hereafter thou shalt know; therefore no more:
Cease to oppose, for if I wash thee not,
With me thou hast no part." Struck to the soul
With horror at the thought, his eager words,
Wing'd with the flame of rhapsody, burst forth:
"Oh! not my feet alone...my hands, my head;
Wash me all o'er, and sanctify each part."

"There needs not this," the meek REDEEMER
cry'd,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 53

" Enough is done ; thus wash'd, tho' but in part,
Thou shalt be clean thro'out. Yet I'll not say
Ye are all clean. Spite of the Shepherd's care,
The taint hath touch'd his flock. Alas ! for him
On whom the foul contamination lights ;
Woe to that wretch that ever he was born !
And do ye need a comment to expound 480
This lesson of humility and love ?
Ye call me Lord and Master ; well ye say,
For such in truth I am ; if then your Lord
Be meek and lowly, will not ye renounce
Pride and contention ? If the Master stoops
To wash his feet who serves, shall ye do less
To these your equal brethren ? Learn of me,
And each with other deal, as I with you. [nigh
Write on your hearts my words ; the time draws
When I shall speak no more with you on earth.
Ye have all heard ; how blest if ye obey !
I speak not of you all : Whilst here ye sit
In seeming fellowship around this board,
Sharing the social meal, my last on earth,
Doubt not but I can search into your breasts,
And see whose hearts are loyal, whose is false :
And mark me well, I fall not by man's wiles—
Not unpredicted is the trait'rous act, [hand
And well I know the wretch, whose faithless
Dips with me in the dish, shall soon be dy'd 450
With my devoted blood. Betray'd I am—

Deceiv'd I cannot be."—This when they heard,
Each with the other interchang'd a look
Of question and suspect; speechless they star'd,
Confounded and aghast: As men, drawn forth
For decimation, tremble to unfold
The lot of life or death, so these in doubt
On whom the word of prophecy might light,
Curious, yet fearful to inquire of CHRIST,
Search'd their own hearts in silence. All per-
ceiv'd

**Omniscience, which to God alone belongs,
Familiar with their thoughts, and every soul
Save that dire wretch whom conscience only
smote,**

Trembled, lest unpremeditated guilt
Might be denounc'd upon him, or the sin
Of one man, as of Korah, move the Lord
With the whole congregation to be wroth.
But PETER, in whose ever-anxious mind
These terrors undispell'd long could not dwell,
To the belov'd disciple, on the breast 470
Of CHRIST reclining, now gave sign to ask
The fearful question, in what traitor's heart
Plot so accurs'd could harbor. Thus besought,
Though much his humble nature fear'd offence,
In accent soft, with supplicating eye
Turn'd on the Master, the meek suitor said :
"Lord, shew thy true and faithful servants grace,

And let us know the traitor." "He it is,"
 JESUS reply'd, "on whom I shall bestow
 This sop, when I have dipp'd it in my cup." 480

He said, and as he plung'd the morsel in,
 All eyes were fix'd upon the fatal work,
 Wond'ring on whom he would bestow the spell;
 And soon with silent horror they beheld
 The saturated sop to JUDAS giv'n,
 Pledge of perdition; he with greedy haste
 Devour'd it, by the fiend within him urg'd;
 For MAMMON to the dark divan had told
 The joyful tidings, and had posted back
 Swift as the magic whirlwind, conjur'd up 490
 By all hell's wizard imps, could drive him on,
 And now sat nestling in the traitor's heart,
 Brooding his filthy spawn. Great was the joy
 Of the infernal tempter, thus to find
 That guardian Pow'r, whose providence he
 fear'd,

By these symbolic elements withdrawn,
 And his apostate victim now cast out
 From the Lord's Supper, alien from God's grace,
 And soul-surrender'd to hell's gloomy realm.

Now as the spell within him 'gan to work, 500
 The traitor's visage, like the troubled sea
 Uptorn and furrow'd with tempestuous winds,
 Shifted its hues, now deadly pale, aghast
 And horror struck, now fiery red, deform'd

With hellish rage, and from man's semblance
chang'd

To very dæmon, terrible to sight.

Oh ! what a fall from heav'n to deeper hell
Than thought can fathom...horrors worse than
heart

Of man, unless abandon'd of his God,
Can suffer or conceive ! Words do but fail 510
To paint that unreveal'd abyss, those depths
Of the immeasur'able profound, where groans,
Wailings and woes and tossings amidst fires
Unquenchable await the wretch condemn'd !

Meanwhile, in cloudless majesty and mild,
The Saviour's face divine on all around
Effulgent beam'd ; about his temple shone
A radiant glory : This when JUDAS saw,
Whom now the sp'rit of darkness had possess'd,
And none such in the sphere of that pure light
Long could abide, he started from his couch
Prepar'd for flight, when thus in few the Lord :
"Go then ! and what thou hast in hand to do,
Do quickly ; so depart !" The word of power,
Though gentle, yet commanding, JUDAS heard,
And instantly the spirit took him thence ;
Nor could he not obey ; for so rebuk'd
The prince of hell, SATAN himself, had fled.
The faithful remnant sate in mute suspense,
Pondering what this dismissal might import.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 57

The Master with a glance discern'd their tho'ts;
He saw them in profound conjecture lost...
Humbled in heart and sad—their honor stain'd
By base defection, and their faith convuls'd :
When thus, at once to strengthen and console
Their wav'ring minds, these healing words he
spake :

“ Let not your hearts be troubled : Ye believe
In God ; believe also in me his Son.
Doubt not but in the compass of the heav'ns
My Father will provide, for all his saints, 540
Mansions of peace, seats of eternal bliss, [dwell,
Where sp'rits made perfect after death shall
And rest from earthly toils. Thither I go
To seal your sure election, and prepare
For you, my faithful servants, an abode ;
That, as in sorrow here, so there in bliss
With me your Lord, now dying for your sakes,
Ye may surmount the grave, and ever live
In heavenly communion undisturb'd.
Lament not therefore if I now depart, 550
Your provident precursor, for ye know
Whither I go, and also know the way.

“ Lord, we are ignorant and dim-sighted men,”
THOMAS reply'd ; “ we see not what thou see'st ;
And as it stands not in our reach to guess
Whither thou go'st, how should we know the
way ?”

“ I am the Way,” th’ inspired Teacher cry’d,
 “ I am the Truth, the Life : None can approach
 The Father but by me ; me had ye known,
 This blindness had been done away ; and now
 Behold Him present !”—“ Where ?” still doubt-
 ing cry’d

One of the astonish’d number ; “ Oh ! impart
 That intellectual vision to discern
 And see the Father ; set Him in our view
 In form demonstrative ; we ask no more.”

“ Say’st thou ?” resum’d the Lord, “ and have
 I been
 So long familiar, yet so little known ?
 Will not the works, O PHILIP, I have done...
 Done in thy sight, instruct thee whence I am,
 And what my pow’r ? Doth there need light for
 this ? [thee,
 ’Midst the broad blaze of proofs that shine about
 Canst thou not see God’s presence in his power ?
 Of this mortality which ye behold,
 This fleshy self, I speak not ; ’tis the Spirit,
 The virtue of my Father, which is in me...
 In act how visible, in voice how strong,
 Clear, and express ! And can you see and hear
 And yet withhold belief ? Oh, slow of faith !
 If words cannot persuade, let works convince ;
 If miracles, which only God can do, 580
 Are done before your eyes, how say you then, ?

'Shew us the Father?' Sanctify your hearts
 From fear and terror ; though the hour come on,
 When to the silent mansions of the dead,
 From this impen'tent world, I must withdraw,
 Mourn not, but let your grief be turn'd to joy ;
 For as in me the Father, so in Him
 I live and move ; my Spirit, though unseen,
 Still present, shall protect and hover o'er you.
 I will not leave you comfortless ; my Name 590
 Shall be your tower of refuge ; with my peace
 Now dying I endow you : of that peace [poil'd ;
 By this world's pow'rs you ne'er shall be des-
 And in my name whatever ye shall ask
 Believing, ye shall have. By faith in me
 Ye shall command the elements...uplift
 The everlasting mountains by their roots,
 And whelm them in the centre of the sea.
 Thus in my name potential ye shall do,
 And greater works than these. By faith in me
 Ye shall confront th' oppressor ; 'midst the
 shock
 Of tribulations and the angry scorn
 Of a malignant world, abhorr'd, despis'd,
 Thrust from their synagogues, ye shall possess
 Your souls in patience, glorying to endure
 Like tribulation with your martyr'd Lord.
 Despair not, therefore, for before that day
 A Comforter shall come, whom I will send,

And he shall teach you all things. When ye
stand

Before the judgment seat of impious men,
Friendless, accus'd, environ'd with a throng
Of perjur'd witnesses athirst for blood,
Your Guardian Spirit shall provide a voice,
Action and eloquence, and prompt your lips;
With untaught language, to resound my Name
With tongue miraculous through all the world.
Wars then and rumors, and portentous signs,
Famine and earthquakes and disastrous plagues
Shall vex the nations ; prophets shall arise,
With lying divinations to confound 620

The weak, pervert the wavering, and perplex
The very saints themselves. Await the time ;
These are but harbingers of mightier woes ;
The day of terror is but in its dawn.

The powers of earth and heav'n must undergo
Direful convulsion ; this majestic pile,
This temple, shall become so mere a wreck,
That not one stone shall rest upon another.
Then shall your hour of tribulation come ;
Then, to confess my name shall be your crime,
By torture and by death to be aton'd.

The tyrants of the world shall then let loose
Their persecuting rage, and great shall be
The falling-off of many ; rocks and caves
Shall be your hiding-places ; yet from thence

Your sound shall echo to the farthest ends
 Of the redeemed earth ; from those dark cells
 The beams of revelation shall break forth,
 Maugre the pow'rs of hell ; and blest is he,
 Whose faith unshaken shall abide the time, 640
 Till the great end and consummation comes,
 My peace and my salvation to insure.
 Few are the moments now and passing swift,
 Which thus conversing we have yet in hand.
 Servants no more...henceforth I call you friends;
 Therefore, as friends and children, let your love
 Each to the other knit your hearts together
 In brotherly communion ; this command,
 New to the world, I give you : Let good will,
 And peace and concord harmonize your souls,
 And mark you as the followers of Him,
 Whose every act was charity—whose life
 Was spent and clos'd expiring for your sakes.
 And stronger proof of love what man can give,
 Than to yield up his body to the grave,
 And die, as shortly I shall, for his friends ?
 Time was that I have shadow'd out my speech
 In proverbs and allusions ; time now is
 To cast obscurity aside, and shew
 Th' unveil'd glories of the Father to you. 660
 Henceforward ye shall ask of Him and have ;
 My name for your petitions shall suffice ;
 My pray'rs ye need not, for the Father's love

Without an intercessor shall protect
 Mine, as you love me, and prevent your wants.
 From Him I came into this world; to Him,
 This world now leaving, I again return."

This said, conviction smote their glowing
 hearts

With faith, and hope's bright image new inspir'd,
 And scenes of future glory beaming on them :
 When thus, with voices join'd in loud acclaim,
 CHRIST in the Godhead manifest they hail'd :

" Now, Lord, we hear and understand thy
 words...

Plain words and not in parables involv'd.
 Now are we sure all knowledge is reveal'd.
 All pow'r committed to thee from above,
 And without further question we believe,
 And henceforth know thou camest forth from
 God."

" Do ye at length believe ?" the Master cry'd;
 " Behold, the hour comes on, yea, now is
 come,

When your strong faith shall stagger at the
 scene

Of these impending horrors, and shrink back :
 Confounded and appall'd ; to the four winds,
 Wide as your fears can spread you, all shall fly,
 And leave me struggling, with a storm of woes,
 Unfriended and alone. What did I say ?

**Thee, the true God alone, and JESUS CHRIST,
Thy Messenger and Advocate with thee
For lost mankind. Father ! to me restore
That glory, which was mine before all time,
Or ere the world was made, and man fell off
From his obedience, now at length redeem'd
From sin by my atonement, and made heir
Of life eternal, purchas'd with my blood.
The act of mediation is complete ;
Thy work is finish'd, and thy name gone forth
These of thine election : Thine they were, 710
To me thou gav'st them, and they have receiv'd**

**And kept as faithful witnesses thy word.
For them I pray : The world, which now I leave,
Hath no more part with me ; for them alone,
Not for the world, I pray ; they must abide....
I shall depart, and be at peace with Thee.
O holy Father ! keep them in thy Name
Whole and entire, link'd in the bond of faith,
Firm as I hold them : One alone is lost,
Son of perdition ! him the prophets saw 720
In their prospective visions, and foretold
That so thy Son should suffer ; but for these,
They are unstain'd ; they stand not in the guilt
And condemnation of that wretch accurst.
I pray thee not to take them from the world,
Through which I send them forth as shining
 lights [search
To draw men's eyes and hearts, and guide their
To the bright source whence thy salvation
 beams.**

These are my ministers, as I am thine ;
Oh ! sanctify them thro' thy truth ! For them,
And all through them converted to thy word,
Father, I pray. Translate them in thy time :
From this unquiet world to that high state
Of heav'nly bliss, where they may dwell with me
And see my glory : So shall they receive
Thy love, thro' me transfus'd into their hearts,
And rest from all their sorrows in thy peace :

So spake the Lord, and with these gracious
words

His faithful remnant cheer'd ; for soft they fell
As heav'n's blest dew upon the thirsty hills, 740
And sweet the healing balm, which they distill'd
On sorrow-wounded souls. Now treach'rous eve
Crept silent on, and threw her dusky veil
O'er Nature's face, masking the deeds of men.
The Saviour rose ; for in his conscious breast
A warning voice had whisper'd, " Up, arise,
Go forth to death ! One solemn act remains...
One sacrifice ; 'tis now God's wrath demands
Atonement—a whole world's redemption now
Hangs on the minute's point." Behold him, then,
A voluntary victim, leading forth
His sad disciples to the fatal spot,
Where treason lurk'd in ambush for his life,
Where stood the prince of darkness and his
powers,

Arm'd with commission'd terrors to assail
Him single...him forsaken...him oppos'd
To myriads, whilst heav'n's angels soar'd aloof,
Trembling spectators of th' unequal strife.
Who now so comfortless as God's own Son ?
His soul in woes unutterable whelm'd, 760
All commerce with its native heav'n deny'd,
Press'd down to earth ; nor other strength had he,
Than in his human nature might be found,

To combat more than human agonies,
Accumulated pangs, which all the sins
Of all the world, from loss of paradise
By man's first fall, to the last damning page
Of heav'n's black register, had pil'd upon him,
The mass of ages. Oh ! what tongue can speak
The love of our REDEEMER ? And yet man, 770
Ungrateful, impious man, hourly reviles
His Benefactor's name...affects the style
Of sophistry and metaphysic pride
To quibble with salvation, and renounce
Those guides, that lead us by the hand to heav'n.
This they call reason...this man's natural right
To question his Creator, and in pride
Of independent dignity reject
Salvation, rather than consent to own
God's privilege to save him by such means 780
As to God's wisdom best and meetest seem'd.
Such monsters doth this teeming earth produce!
Impious audacity ! which dares to say,
" I need no Mediator...I disclaim
CHRIST and his offer'd peace; 'twixt God and me
I want no advocate to plead my cause—
By my own rectitude I stand or fall :
The evangelic volumes I regard
As fabricated tales of juggling tricks,
Witness'd by none but partners in the craft :
Deep read in pagan story, I confront

The sacred records with the silent page
Of those, who register no strange eclipse,
No noon-day darkness, not one friendly groan
Of sympathizing nature to attest
CHRIST'S dying hour."—Shut, shut the Book of
Life—

Go to the Jews, the Pagans, for thy creed ;
Go to the dust, blasphemer ? In the ear
Of Death whisper thy doubts, and learn of him
Thy folly's confutation and thy doom, 800
In those sad realms, to which he shall conduct
Thy trembling soul, when the arch-angel's
trump

Hath summon'd thee to judgment, and set ope
The grave, thy rashness deem'd forever clos'd.



CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD BOOK.

Isca-riot, having separated himself from Christ, wanders through the streets of the city in a disconsolate manner, and at length arrives at the brook Cedron without the gates. Here he breaks forth into soliloquy, in which, after reviewing his past situation, he affects to justify his present motives for betraying his Master to the priests. Christ and his disciples, proceeding to the Mount of Olives, are discovered by him as they are passing the brook in their way thither, and Judas resolves upon availing himself of the opportunity for delivering Christ into the hands of his enemies. In the mean time, the priests and elders assemble in the palace of Caiaphas, and there hold a council upon the measures to be pursued for the apprehension of Christ: The high priest harangues the assembly to this immediate purport: In the interim, Judas is announced, and being admitted, makes his proposal to the council: this produces some observations on the part of Caiaphas, and is objected to by Nicodemus, who, after delivering his opinion, quits the assembly. Caiaphas then takes up the matter afresh, controverts the sentiments of Nicodemus, and, with the approbation of all present, closes with the proposals of Judas, and sends out a company with this traitorous disciple to the Mount of Olives, there to apprehend the person of Christ. The assembly breaks up, and the hall is no sooner evacuated by the priests and elders than their seats are filled by Satan and his infernal spirits. Satan addresses to them a congratulatory speech on the success of Mammon's temptation, on whom he bestows many high encomiums; an ovation takes place in honor of that dæmon, when Chemos appears, wounded by the spear of Gabriel, whom he had encountered on the Mount of Olives, where he had been posted as a spy upon the motions of Christ and his disciples. Satan, enraged at the account, sallies forth with a resolution to revenge the attack, by punishing the temerity of Gabriel—arms himself for the occasion, and, after much proud vaunting of his superior prowess, disappears, and the infernal spirits disperse.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK III.

THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

DARK came the evening on, and the pale moon,
Now faintly glimm'ring through a wint'ry cloud,
Shed her dim horrors o'er the shadowy earth ;
Whilst through the silent streets, with step disturb'd,

And heart by hellish meditation rent,
The outcast of the Lord pursu'd his way—
ISCARIOT, name for evermore accurst.
Onward he went, unquestion'd, unobserv'd,
(For all upon this solemn night kept house,)
Nor stopp'd till forth the city gates he came 10
To Cedron's brook, whose bubbling current laves
The olive-crown'd Mount, favour'd of CHRIST
For its umbrageous groves and silent haunts,
For pray'r and contemplation fit retreat.
Here first, as one awaken'd to new thoughts,
Starting, he check'd his step, and with a groan,
That rent his lab'ring bosom, thus broke forth :

“ Oh, my torn heart ! Oh, soul-tormenting
scenes !

Can I forget the blissful hours I've pass'd
Beneath your shades, list'ning the Master's
words? 20

When, as he spake of heav'n and heav'nly joys,
Of righteousness and the blest sp'rits with God,
Such life in his description glow'd, methought
All paradise was present to my view
And courted me to enter. Heav'n and earth!
Must I remember? Never man like him
Could with such magic eloquence entrance
The senses of his hearers, lift the soul
To heav'nly contemplations, and transport
To thoughts beyond itself; thence to look down
Upon this lower world and all its cares,
Its pains, its persecutions with contempt:
Sometimes, envelop'd in mysterious schemes
And parables, he couch'd the moral truth,
Which, painted on the memory, left its tints
Indelible: But when, with tongue inspir'd,
The fall of nations he foretold, and drew
The curtain of futurity aside;
When in the pomp of numbers he describ'd
Jerusalem beleaguer'd with a host 40
Of Gentile foes, and trodden down to dust,
Her matrons and her virgins whelm'd in blood,
Or dragg'd to violation, shame and bondage,
By ruffian spoilers; when his soaring flight,
Spurning the world's wide compass, scal'd the
skies,

And there, amidst the empyrean fields,
 As in his proper region, shook the spheres
 Of sun, moon, stars, as with a master's hand,
 And shew'd them falling in prophetic awe
 Of his own glorious coming in a cloud 50
 With pow'r and state supernal ; then our hearts
 With sympathetic raptures burnt within us,
 And we, vain mortals, saw, or thought we saw,
 Our own vile bodies glorify'd to share
 In his triumphant entry, and ourselves
 To dignities and thrones and starry spheres
 Exalted, loftiest in the realms of light.
 But now these bright illusions are no more—
 Vanish'd these glitt'ring scenes, my claims on
 heav'n

All cancell'd, and my hopes a bankrupt's dream,
 Mocking the haunted fancy with a pile
 Of visionary wealth. Behold me sham'd,
 Banish'd his board, detected, and my thoughts
 Turn'd outward to provoke my brethren's scorn,
 And blazon forth his prescience : Let that pass !
 Traitor pronounc'd, a traitor I will be ;
 That prophecy at least shall be fulfill'd.
 Though, master of my will, I could refute
 And dash his bold prediction, yet my heart
 Ponders revenge more suited to its wrongs, 70
 Greater than such slight triumph can bestow,
 And not less terrible than death itself.

This night, the last that he shall walk at large—
This night shall be his triumph or his fall.
If these grave elders who conspire his death—
These reverend priests revolt not from the deed,
That casts on them, their function and their tribe,
The peril of his blood, why should my heart
Shrink from its purpose ? What have I to fear
In act subordinate, in cause supreme, 80
Traitor prejudg'd, of uncommitted crimes
Arraign'd, and thrown upon the world condemn'd ?”

More he had said ; but, like a serpent coil'd,
With sudden start he shrunk into himself,
And, list'ning, held his breath to catch the sound
Of steps, that, echoing o'er the flinty soil,
Bespoke a company in near approach : [heard,
With these the Master's well-known voice he
Whereat, like murd'rous Cain when call'd of God,
The cowering, conscious outcast slunk aside, 90
And wrapp'd his russet cloak about his head,
Then darkling stood ; the holy troop meanwhile
Forded the shallow brook, and held their way
Straight to the Olive Mount, their wonted haunt.
Forth sprung the lurking caitiff from his watch :
The greedy Mammon rush'd upon his heart,
Glorying that now he held them in his net,
Darkness conspiring with occasions apt
Of hour and place to make his vengeance sure.

Remorse was dead within him...every sense 100
Of virtue lost...yet in his coward breast
Such languor, dread, and cold repugnance dwelt,
Scarce could the breath of hell's worse fiend
suffice

To blow it into flame : Now sudden rage
Impell'd him onward ; now, with palsied fear
Struck back, he reel'd and shook in ev'ry joint.
This SATAN saw, and evermore at hand
To drive the wav'ring sinner to his doom,
Breath'd all his sp'rit upon him ; direr blast
Cocytus never vented—the full tide 110
Of aconite engender'd with his blood,
His brain set ev'ry fev'rish nerve in play,
And screw'd his heated fancy to the pitch
Of daring and defiance : yet the wretch,
No less a traitor to himself than CHRIST,
Or ere the acting of the dreadful deed,
Thus strove, by sophistry, to gloss it o'er :

“ Why do I doubt? What horrors shake my
mind ?

Why should not my affronted honor stir
Me to betray, as their insulted law 120
Provokes our elders to destroy their foe ?
For Moses they, I for myself oppose ? [heart
And where's the wrong, if he, who knows my
And all its meditations, will not deign
To turn it from its purpose, and divert

The danger he foreknows ; nay, rather helps
To lure the embryo treason into birth ?
Either his own free will makes death its choice,
And so becomes accomplice in the deed ;
Or else, foredoom'd to die, he knows his hour ;
And thus, not acting of ourselves, but rul'd
By strong necessity, we stand absolv'd,
Mere guiltless tools and instruments of fate.
What then ? Why let the scriptures be fulfill'd ;
Let prophecies, which are the voice of God,
Sound out his knell ; we fight not against heav'n.
Let CHRIST, if glory waits him in the grave,
Descend into the dust and seek it there :
If his soul covets to make league with death,
And dwell in consort with corruption's worm,
What time more apt for death than this dark
hour,

Image of death itself ? And who so fit
As God's high-priest, the temple's minister,
To put life's intervening veil aside,
And usher him to glory ? I, meanwhile,
His humble harbinger, will go before [road
T' announce his coming, and make clear the
That leads to death, the goal of his ambition.
Yet how if all this tame indifference
Be but a feint to draw the world about him, 150
And then amaze them with some grand display
Of wonder-working power ? And who can tell

How far his hand miraculous may stretch,
Who from the tomb pluck'd forth the fest'ring
corpse

Of shrouded Lazarus, three days in earth,
And bade him live again? Stupendous act!
This we beheld, and hail'd him Lord of Life!
But still the unconverted Jews stood off,
And deem'd us witnesses of slight account,
Weak, cred'lous men, first dup'd, and thence
become 160

Associates in imposture. What remains
But instantly to put my thoughts in act,
And yield him up to those, who, in th' attempt
Succeeding, vindicate their disbelief..

Failing, abide the shame of their defeat?

In this or that opinion there must be

A dangerous error: to persist were fatal:

This night dispels all doubt. If he be CHRIST,

He lives confest, and triumphs over death;

If man, he falls unpitied and abjur'd." 170

Thus for foul deeds pretending fair excuse,
The caitiff wretch, on trait'rous errand bent,
Back through the city gates pursu'd his way,
And to his nightly assignation hied.

Perch'd on the summit of the sacred Mount,
Should'ring God's temple, a proud palace stood:
There dwelt the sovereign pontiff, and this night
Held solemn convocation and consult,

Not for God's glory—other cares had they...
Cares nearer to their selfish hearts...concerns
Heav'n had no part in...impious, dire cabals,
How to prevent the day-spring from on high,
Now by CHRIST's revelation, and his acts
Miraculous, just dawning on the world ;
Aforetime wrapt in darkness black as death,
Best veil for their hypocrisy and craft.
In their great hall of council, there in ranks,
Precedencies, and dignities dispos'd...
Doctors, and long-rob'd pharisees, and scribes,
And bearded elders met ; senate, to whom 190
For machinations, plots, and secret wiles,
Rome's purple conclave stoops. High over all
On throne pontifical, in robes of state,
With sacred ephod girt of various hues, [gems,
And breast-plate glittering bright with mystic
Mitre-crown'd CAIAPHAS, the temple's chief,
Exalted sate : The sanhedrim was full.
All came, whom lust of power, or bigot zeal,
Or enmity to CHRIST rous'd to the call ;
Mouth-worshippers of God, agents of hell 200
In heart, and hypocrites abhorr'd of CHRIST,
To public scorn held up and pictur'd out
As rebel husbandmen, who basely slew
Their Lord's commission'd Son. Scarce was
there one,
Whose galled conscience had not felt the sting

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 79

Of some keen truth extorted from the lips
Of the else-humble Jesus, meek to all
But the proud pharisee or cav'ling scribe...
To knaves, who thought by cunning to outwit
Wisdom itself, and snare him in his talk ; 219
To hypocrites, who fasted oft with sad
And woe-worn faces to be seen of men,
Or such as made long pray'rs for a display
Of righteousness, and vaunted their good deeds,
Mocking their conscience and insulting heav'n :
To these, in all the majesty of truth,
Frowning he spake, nor spar'd he for rebuke
Severe, indignant ; many a time and oft
To their whole sect he had denounced woe ;
Woe trembled on their heads : What wonder,
then, 220

If thus combin'd by interest to oppose
His spreading glories, their envenom'd hearts
Rankled with envy, hatred, and revenge ?
Nor were there wanting to their great divan
Those, who can work unseen within the heart,
Dark ministers, who know to touch the springs
And cords, whose movements can convulse the
soul

With furious passions, bursting from their mine,
Like sulph'rous fires that tear the quaking earth.
SATAN himself was there ; for at this hour 230
He and his host had furlough upon earth,

Dæmons of blood, ambition, envy, strife,
Rang'd the vex'd world at large. Loud were
their tongues,

And fiery hot their zeal against the Lord,
Whose miracles, resounding through the land,
Rung in their ears the downfall of their pow'r,
Ill-omen'd knell. "Brethren! 'tis time to
rouse,"

Cry'd CAIAPHAS, and started from his throne
Furious as Korah, when at his tent door
With his rebellious company he stood, 240
And, waving high his censer, call'd aloud
To mutiny against Moses: So now call'd,
With voice as loud, and deeper plung'd in crime,
Than these who sunk outright, this second
priest,

This worse revolter against God himself,
In his own Son reflected; from his state,
High o'er their heads exalted, he look'd down
On all beneath; then, with uplifted eyes
And hands extended, as in act to rend
His robes pontifical—"Yes, sacred seers," 250
Again he cry'd, "yes, venerable priests,
Elders, and reverend sages of our law,
'Tis more than time to call your vengeance up;
Awake! ye sleep too long. For me, your slave,
Servant of servants—me, by how much more
In place exalted so much more in heart

Abas'd, as meritless of such high state,
 I were content to cast these robes aside,
 Pluck off this beard, and on this mitred head,
 Unworthy of such honors, scatter dust 260
 And ashes, might such penitence avert
 The shame that for my sins is falling on you,
 And quell the madd'ning faction now afloat,
 Since this bold Bethlemite hath started up
 To mock the church of God. Shall it be said
 That for my punishment these evils light
 On you, the righteous?—that in my day rose
 This innovator to conspire your fall,
 To broach new doctrines, and unhinge the faith
 Of the still wav'ring multitude? If I, 270
 If I am in the crime—if in your thoughts
 My negligence hath foster'd this revolt,
 Make me your sacrifice...thrust me from hence,
 For this high place unfit; set up your cross,
 And there exalt me: But if I am clear,
 (And this your looks encourage me to hope)—
 If CHRIST not CAIAPHAS deserves the death,
 Why do you pause? What terror holds you back?
 Time-honor'd rabbi, elders, sages, guides
 And masters of our Israel! ye by whom 280
 Our synagogues are taught, of God's own law
 Interpreters ordain'd, which of your grave
 And reverend council will at once unfold
 To my yet faithless ears the mighty spell

By which this JESUS works ? Who will expound
This prodigy, that sets the crowd agape...

This more than man, of whom the people bruit
These more than human doings? You are dumb;

None offers a reply ; for none will say

This wisdom and these mighty works accord
With one so mean of birth...with Joseph's Son,

A base mechanic. Fitter task for him

To use his father's craft, and humbly ply

The workman's tools, than in the temple sit :

Disputing with our doctors ; or withdrawn,

As late the Baptist, to some desert mount,

There sit in sullen dignity enthron'd,

And from his rocky theatre declaim [heard

To list'ning thousands. Here be some have

His doctrines...many have endur'd his taunts, 300

And though in wise and well-pois'd minds like

yours

Such meteors breed no terror, yet they draw

The gazing vulgar, and so rank a taint [doubt

Runs through th' infected fold, that much I

If half the flock of Israel be not touch'd ;

So diligent is he to spread the plague—

So careless we to stem it. If his word

Be suffer'd thus to overturn our law,

The monument of ages, then, alas !

We've seen the last of these solemnities : 310

Before this night returns there'll not be found

**Or lamb for sacrifice, or priest to slay,
Or temple to receive our Paschal rites ; [world,
Rome, whose ambition grasps the conquer'd
Shall plant her eagles on our holy mount,
And Jupiter usurp JEHOVAH's shrine."**

**He paus'd, yet stood as one in act to speak,
Struggling for words, which furious passion
choak'd**

**And stifled on his tongue ; a stormy cloud
Hung on his brow, his visage ghastly pale, 320
Madd'ning with rage he stamp'd and shook his
robe.**

**As when the Delphic prophetess, convuls'd
And foaming on her tripod, sets aghast
The scar'd enthusiasts, who believe her fill'd
And fighting with the God oracular ;
So through the hall of council silence reign'd,
Whilst expectation turn'd all eyes and ears
On their wrapt prophet ; till the word being giv'n,
That one of CHRIST's disciples stood without,
And instant audience crav'd, that awful name
Their spell-bound faculties at once set free ;
Instant loud murmurs fill'd the vaulted roof,
Like the deep roar of subterranean tides,
Whose eddies undermine the cavern'd shores
Of sea-girt Mona or Bermuda's isle.
This past, the senate's chief resum'd his throne ;
Whence from his state inclining he gave sign**

For silence, and commanded to admit
 Their unexpected suitor ; at the word
 Wide flew the doors apart, and there behold,
 With cloak t' the knee tucked up, and staff in
 hand,

ISCARIOT, caitiff viler than the worst
 That e'er wore pilgrim's sanctimonious garb
 In after times, when fierce crusading zeal
 Sent forth its wandering eremites to put
 The murd'rous sword in meek Religion's hand,
 The cross, on which our patient Lord expir'd,
 Their badge of victory, and signal made
 For their destroying armies, lur'd to war
 With pardons earn'd in fields of carnage, fought
 For God's pretended glory, as if (dire hope !)
 Rivers of blood could waft their souls to heav'n.
 Founder of these, and prototype of all,
 Who dy'd the cross with blood, ISCARIOT stood
 Full of the fiend, and cast around on all
 His haggard eyes, that augur'd vengeful ire
 And fraud deep-brooding in his treach'rous heart:
 When after pause now summon'd to expound
 His purpose, whether by his Master sent,
 Or self-impell'd, thus MAMMON'S convert spake:
 " Fathers of Israel, patrons of our law,
 And chiefly thou, great priest, vicar of God,
 And faithful shepherd of the remnant sav'd
 From Abraham's scatter'd flock! I muse not, lords,

That you are cast in wonder to behold
 Me standing in this place—me, to your cause
 Unfriendly deem'd, and, which to all is known,
 Nor on my part deny'd, one of the Twelve,
 And follower of JESUS. But, grave sirs,
 I do adjure you by your love to truth, 370
 No longer wear this jealous eye upon me,
 Than to your patient ears I shall unfold,
 Why hither I am come, not as a thief
 To steal into your councils, spy them out
 And after blazon them, but in fair faith
 And plain sincerity, with no double heart
 To make confession sure, and give my life
 A pledge into your hands. Stand not amaz'd,
 As if it were a thing impossible
 That CHRIST's disciple should not be his friend.
 Mine hath been toilsome husbandry, my lords ;
 And none but bitter fruits have I reap'd from it,
 Fruits of repentance. Weary days and nights
 I've minister'd to him without reward,
 And weary miles full many travell'd o'er,
 Fainting and pinch'd with hunger ; then at night,
 When the wild creatures of the earth find rest,
 And covert in their holes, houseless have watch'd
 Amidst the shock of elements, and brav'd
 Storms which the mail'd rhinoceros did not dare
 Unshelter'd to abide. Sometimes on sea,
 Lash'd by the surging waves, I've toil'd for life,

Whilst he sate sleeping, reckless of the gale :
Rescu'd from these (for I of force confess
His pow'r is absolute) and safe on shore,
My labors ceas'd not with the scene ; new toils,
New tasks succeeded : Now to rocks and caves,
To sandy wilds, or wheresoever else
The Spirit led and desolation reign'd,
His wand'ring steps I follow'd ; yes, his steps...
But at what distance from his heart he held me,
Bear witness, mem'ry ! Others had his heart,
Peter and James and John ; to them he breath'd
The secrets of his soul—on them he shower'd
His promises ; of these he made no thrift—
These he abounded in ; to me he gave
What he had least in store, a barren purse,
And bade me bear it ; no hard task I own,
For it was light as beggary could make it,
But office most ignoble. Here perchance 410
Your wisdom would demand of me a cause,
Why I endur'd these slights year after year,
And still toil'd on in such a thankless service !
What fascination and what spell, you'll ask,
Doth this man work with, so to charm the mind
And lure it on through mortifying toils,
Sorrows, and pains, and, worse than these, con-
tempts,
Yet hold it still enchain'd, slave to his will ?
Most equal judges, I must here submit

My weakness to your censure, and refer 420
 My cause to mercy, or, in self-defence,
 Conjure you for a moment to descend
 From your high state, and to my humble place
 And peasant thoughts accord your own great
 minds.

My lords, I neither mean to varnish o'er
 My own too feeble nature, nor to smooth
 The rough sincerity of truth, through fear
 Or flattery of those, 'fore whom I speak.
 If JESUS works by spells, I know them not ;
 Pray'rs, but not incantations, I have heard ; 430
 If these be charms, they are no charms for devils;
 Yet such he's charg'd withal : Neither by league
 With Beelzebub, as some have gravely urg'd,
 Nor art Samaritan, nor else by imp
 Or genius, as the heathen loudly vouch
 Of their fam'd Socrates, do I believe
 His miracles are wrought : Alas ! alas !
 Which of hell's ministers will be suborn'd
 To work his own confusion ? No, they shrink,
 They tremble ; at his bidding they come forth
 From men possest...they vanish to the winds...
 They sink into the pit from whence they sprung.
 I am a man, my lords, not over-prone
 To rash credulity, nor apt to veer
 With ey'ry breath of doctrine, and I've heard
 A voice, that sways the elements, command

The springs of health, making maim'd nature
whole,

Nay, life itself return into the trunk
Which it had left, and give a second pulse
To the cold heart of death : This to have seen,
And not to stand in reverence of the Pow'r
That wrought these miracles, were a degree
Of apathy above my nature's reach."

"No more !" cry'd CAIAPHAS, "no more of this!
You much abuse our patience with this talk.
Here is no place to sound CHRIST's praises forth;
We are not met to recognize his pow'r,
And back his daring claims ; but to chastise
Imposture...to assert our sacred law,
And vindicate the majesty of Heav'n.
You tell us you are wearied with the tasks
Of a hard Master ; quit him then, and earn
A better service—earn a rich reward
By yielding him to justice. You well know
His haunts, his privacies, his darkling hours,
When, without hazard of a public brawl,
We may make lawful seizure for the state
Of his attainted person : On this point,
So you will order your discourse aright,
You may speak freely ; of his praise no more."

To him th' Apostate—"If from my forc'd lips,
Unwilling witnesses although they be, [utter,
Truth wrings this praise, the last which they will

Suffer thus far in candor, and let pass
 These words in justice to a Master's fame,
 Whom I renounce, and with an oath devote
 To wrath...to punishment...to death itself,
 If death you doom. But oh! most reverend lords,
 It is not as a false and juggling cheat...
 A dealer with familiars I present him 480
 To your just judgment: Wretches vile as these
 Would but disgrace your wrath and my revenge,
 But take him as a victim from my hands
 Richer than hecatombs of vulgar blood,
 A sacrifice for God's high-priest to make,
 Whilst all earth's sceptred monarchs stood a-
 round

To gaze upon the work. Be not deceiv'd:
 I know the jeopardy in which I stand,
 Yet I will on; in me is no delay;
 This night, this hour, this instant I am yours
 To trace him to his haunts...to be your guide
 And marshal you to vengeance. But beware!
 Let them be chosen men you send, approv'd
 And constant, tho' the heav'ns shall rain down
 fire, [call'd

And the earth rock beneath them: He, who
 The dead anatomy to life, can well
 Make corpses of the living."—Here the voice
 Of one, who nearest to the throne had place,
 Cut short the traitor's speech: Of high renown

Was he now rising, NICODEMUS, known 500
To after-ages as the nightly guest
Of JESUS, and his converse with our Lord
In holy writ recorded: Grave he was,
A Pharisee and ruler of the Jews,
Yet not of soul vindictive like the rest,
Nor aspect arrogant; when thus he spake:

“ I call the time mispent, that is bestow'd
On loud-tongu'd orators, whose art it is
To launch their hearers upon passion's tide,
And drive them on, by gusts of windy words,
A giddy, desperate course to rocks and shoals,
Which, steer'd by sage experience, they had
shunn'd.

Such shipwreck of our wisdom we might make,
Should we our better senses now permit
To take improv'dent counsel of our ears,
By this high-ton'd declaimer thus assail'd ;
I pray you, therefore, carry back your thoughts
To times foregone, when prophets have arose
And boasted mighty works, which, being done
Of man's device and cunning, came to nought.
So will it be with JESUS, if his spirit
Be not of God ; time will o'ertake deceit,
If time be let to run ; but cut it short
By death's rash stroke, you cover him with glory,
And from his ashes raise a mightier name
Than living he had reach'd, with all the aids

Of artifice to back him. Give me, heav'n !
That tolerating policy, which shews
No bitterness in speculative points.
Disdaining from my heart what this man says...
A traitor says, who comes to sell his Master,
My sentence never shall affect the life
Of this or any other man, accus'd
On vague presumptions ; nor will I say, *Die !*
Till I have that in proof, which merits death.
For if this JESUS vaunts himself to be
What he is not, God will confute his pride ;
But if with pow'r divine he acts and speaks,
Commission'd to some awful, unseen end, [we
Shall man contend with God ? Vain strife ! shall
Fall off from our great origin, the faith
Of our blest father Abraham ?—shall we,
Sore smitten for our trespasses, cut short
And wasted to a remnant—we, on whom
The guiltless blood of all the prophets rests,
Send this man up to heav'n to cry against us,
And, to a burthen heavier than enough,
Add more and weightier guilt than all the rest ?
Heav'n's grace foresend ! You have my con-
science, lords ;
I leave it to your thoughts : I stand absolv'd.”
He said ; and, conscious that his words were
lost
Upon obdurate hearts, departed thence,

So warn'd of God, and from the gulph escap'd
Of that night's dire perdition, wherein all,
Save him alone, were lost. So in the wreck
Of some great admiral, full fraught for war,
When his tall vessel splits, and the bold crew
Plunge quick into th' abyss, heav'n sometimes
deigns,

By wondrous providence, to snatch one life
From the devouring waves, and waft him home
A solitary relict, there to tell

God's mercies and his sad companions' fate.

Him thus departing the proud pontiff ey'd
With look malign, and to these taunts gave vent:

"Weak is that cause, whose advocate flies
from it:

I pause to see if any here will follow. [peal

None moves, none speaks, none seconds his ap-

'Tis well! One only convert to our foe...

One patron of his cause this senate held,

And holds no longer. Vanish'd, flown, escap'd!

One heart, one mind, one voice now rules the
whole.

For me, I nor opinion shift nor place;

Faithful, I shrink from neither. You have heard

What this wise elder counsels; he hath left

His conscience as a legacy behind him:

Let him, who loves the giver, take the gift;

I, for such part as to my share may fall,

Scorn to engraft that scion on my heart,
Which, if admitted, might impart the seeds
Of treason and apostacy like his. 580
Till cold and hot agree—till selfish fear
And temporizing maxims coalesce
With patriot zeal for Israel and firm faith
In God's reveal'd decrees, his thoughts and mine
Will never mix, and the attempt to join
Their jarring elements could only serve
To make this breast a field of mental war.
Mark, brethren, mark how this man contravenes
Your antient, just, retaliating law.
Moses said, "Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth!"
So is revenge a virtue : By this rule
Jesus must die ; for who puts out the law,
Puts out the light of Israel, stabs the life—
And life for life is justice upon record.
This ordinance our absent elder spurns ;
He holds at nought our ancient equity,
And sets new doctrines forth ; tells us, forsooth,
That we must wait the time...wait till the light
Of Israel be extinct, and leave redress
For those, who without eyes can spy it out. 600
Such counsels would make cowards of us all,
Rebels to God, deserters from the faith,
Traitors to Israel. Can I wear these robes,
And wear a heart within so vile, so base ?
Tear them away, uncover me to shame,

Make me the scorn of men, if, thus array'd
 And deck'd in outside honors, I am found
 False to that King, whose standard I support.
 No, venerable sages, if your rule
 Were short to teach us what our duty is, 610
 The very heathen would inform us of it.
 The Roman soldier, who deserts his post,
 Or sleeping, suffers a surprise, shall die ;
 But we, with God's own armies in our charge—
 We, whose commander is the Lord of Hosts,
 Should we be found thus criminal, what death...
 What doom, more terrible than death itself,
 Can recompense such treason? Forth then, lords!
 Draw out an armed band, and send them forth ;
 Behold a ready leader ! Time yet serves ; 620
 This night no stir, no stragglers in our streets,
 To shake the city's peace ; JESUS secur'd
 And hither brought, a largess I decree
 To all concern'd ; to JUDAS a reward
 Befitting us to give, him to receive."

No more ; loud acclamations shook the hall ;
 Th' assembly rose—the traitor bow'd assent ;
 A band of ruffians, arm'd with swords and staves,
 Forth issued, with ISCARIOT at their head,
 And to the Olive Mountain bent their course.

Oh, hour accurst ! Oh, all ye stars of heav'n !
 And thou pale waning moon, ethereal lights,
 First-born of Nature, look not, ye chaste fires,

Upon this monster-breeding earth ! but quench
Your conscious lamps, and whelm this murd'rous
crew

In darkness black as their own damning plot.
And thou, conductor of the Stygian band,
Vile hypocrite, what fiend inspir'd the thought
To hail thy Master with the kiss of peace,
And so betray him ? Wretch, the time will come,
When, rack'd with horror, lost to every hope,
Thine agonizing soul shall rue this deed...
Curse its birth-hour, and, whilst thy Master soars
To heav'n, triumphant over death and sin,
Thou shalt sink howling to the depths of hell.
Now break your synod up, ye envious priests,
Elders, and scribes ! prepare your harden'd
hearts

To judge the Lord of Life ! convene your spies
To forge false witness, and make smooth the way
To man's redemption by the blood of CHRIST,
The very Paschal Lamb, whom, by the type
Of this night's sacrifice, ye shadow'd forth,
Blind unbelieving prophets as ye are.
Fit hour ye chose, ye murd'rers, to embrue
Your cursed hands in that pure Victim's blood,
Peace-offering for the sins of lost mankind.
Hence to your homes ! there meditate new plots ;
The fiends shall be your helpers ; to your tho'ts
Present, though not to sight, they swarm around,

Now here, now there, now hovering over head,
Where, as your enmity to CHRIST breaks forth,
And your blaspheming voices fill the roof,
Like streaming vapours from sulphureous lakes,
Joyous they catch the welcome sounds, and fan
With clapping wings the pestilential air,
Applauding as they soar. Now clear the hall;
Yield up your seats, ye substituted fiends;
Hence, minor dæmons, give your masters place!
And hark! the King of Terrors speaks the
word;

He calls his shadowy princes...they start forth,
Expand themselves to sight, and throng the hall,
A synod of infernals. Forms more dire
Imagination shapes not, when the wretch,
Whom conscience haunts in the dead hour of
night,

Whilst all is dark and silent round his bed,
Sees hideous phantoms in his fev'rish dreams,
That stare him into madness, with fix'd eyes
And threat'ning faces floating in his brain.
The ghostly monarch mounts the vacant throne;
Gives sign for order; the superiors sit,
Each as his stellar attribute gives rank
And place peculiar—the untitled stand
Circling their LUCIFER, their fallen sun:
He of his state more jealous, as in heart
Conscious of faded glory, in the midst

Now rising after many a hard essay
To wreath his war-worn face into a smile,
Semblance at least of joy, at length with voice,
Screw'd to the pitch of triumph, vaunting cries :

“ Pow'rs and dominions, lords by vict'ry's right
Of earth and man, now from his Maker won
By overthrow of heav'n's last Champion giv'n
In God's own city, battle fairly gain'd
On hostile ground, his Sion's sacred mount,
Warriors, your king applauds you : Thanks,
brave friends ;

Now shall your temples with loud pæans ring...
Your vindicated altars and your groves
Exhale rich clouds of incense, steaming forth
From od'rous gums ; your statues gaily crown'd
With garlands—every trophy, that the art 700
Of painting or of sculpture can bestow,
Shall be hung round to decorate your shrines ;
Your oracles henceforth shall find a voice,
Which future CHRISTs shall never put to silence,
And nations from your lips shall ask their fate.
This day to all posterity shall be
Sacred to games, processions, triumphs, feasts,
And laurel-crown'd bards shall hymn your praise.
But sure no spirit of etherial mould,
(For such of right ye are,) will so forget 710
His native dignity as to repine,
Or gloat with envy, if I now demand

Your tribute of especial praise to him,
 Whom your joint suffrages deputed first
 To this important embassy ; a spirit
 Our subterranean empire cannot mate
 For high authority and potent sway [forth!
 O'er man's subjected heart : MAMMON, stand
 Stand forth, thou prosp'rous, rich, persuasive
 pow'r,

Worshipp'd of all, great idol of the world ! 720
 May fortune on thy patient labours smile,
 Thou persevering deity ! Pursue
 Thy darling metal thro' earth's central veins—
 Ransack her womb for mines ; send forth thy
 slaves

To undiscover'd realms, and bid them sap
 Potosi's glittering mountains for their ore :
 Pull down her golden temples...strip her kings...
 Rack them with tortures...wring their secrets out
 By slow-consuming fires...lay nature waste...
 Let nothing mortal breathe upon the soil 730
 That covers gold. All hell applauds thy zeal,
 And all hell's engines shall assist thy search."

He said, and lo ! from either side the throne
 Upon the signal a seraphic choir
 In equal bands came forth ; the minstrels strike
 Their golden harps ; swift o'er the sounding
 strings
 Their flying fingers sweep, whilst to the strain

melodious voices, though to heav'nly airs
 tun'd no longer, still in sweet accord
 who the festive song, now full combin'd 740
 pouring the choral torrent on the ear,
 parts responsive, now warbling by turns
 their sprightly quick divisions, swelling now
 through all the compass of their tuneful throats.
 their varying cadences, as fancy prompts.
 hereat the Stygian herd, like them of old
 all'd by the Thebian minstrel, stood at gaze
 mute and appeas'd ; for music hath a voice,
 which e'en the devils obey, and for a while
 sweet sounds shall lay their turbid hearts asleep,
 hush'd into sweet oblivion and repose.
 the praise of MAMMON the rapt seraphs sung,
 and gold's almighty pow'r ; free flow'd the
 verse ;
 no need to call the Muse ; for all were there ;
 Apollo and the Heliconian Maids,
 and all that pagan poet e'er invoc'd
 were present to the song. Above the flight
 of bold Alcæus, Tisias bard divine,
 of Pindar's strain Olympic, high it soar'd
 in dithyrambic majesty sublime. 760
 At the right hand of hell's terrific lord
 MAMMON exalted sate, and as the choir
 sang their hymn, his swelling bosom throb'd
 in concert with the strain ; pride flush'd his
 cheek,

Furrow'd with care and toil ; his eyes, now rais'd
From earth, their proper centre, sparkling
gleam'd

Malicious triumph, whilst ovations loud,
And thund'ring plaudits shook the trembling roof.

The song was clos'd, and, order now resum'd,
MAMMON stood forth to speak ; when, ere the
words 770

From his slow lips found way, the infernal king,
With eager action starting from his throne,
Gave sign for silence, and thus interpos'd :

“ Pause, worthy sp'rit, awhile ! my mind fore-
bodes

Cares more immediate, for amid the throng
I spy our faithful CHEMOS ; well I know
'Tis not on slight occasion he hath left
The post assign'd him ; and behold ! his looks
Augur important tidings. Fall back, friends,
And give our gallant centinel access.” 780

Obedient to the word, the opening files
Fell back and let him pass ; he to the throne
Low rev'rence made, and thus his chief address'd :

“ Imperial lord of this seraphic host,
As I kept station on the faithless mount,
Where once my altar blaz'd, revolted now
From its allegiance, and with olive crown'd,
In token of God's peace, I thence descry'd
By glimpse of the pale moon, a vagrant train,

With JESUS at their head, fording the brook, 790
As thither bound. I couch'd upon the watch,
So bidd'n, and to their talk gave heedful ear.

A melancholy theme the Master chose :
Sadly he warns them of his own death's hour
Now near impending, and how all shall fly,
Like scatter'd sheep, and their lone shepherd
leave

Forlorn, abandon'd. This the fiery zeal
Of PETER, to our chief well known, disclaims,
Who boldly vouches, though all else should
swerve,

His own unshaken constancy ; when CHRIST,
Severe, though not with railing, him reproves,
And solemnly denounces triple breach
Of this vain boast, and instant, for this night,
Or ere the cock's shrill trumpet twice shall
sound,

(So CHRIST predicts,) he shall be thrice deny'd
Of this self-vaunting man. All this I heard,
And held it for my duty to report ;
What more ensu'd, imperfectly I learn ;
For now the Master taketh three apart,
And, much disturb'd in soul and sore amaz'd,
Wills them stand off and watch, whilst he retires
And vents his grief in pray'r : I saw him fall
Prostrate to earth, and vent such heart-felt
groans,

That, were I other than I am, less wrong'd,
 Less hostile to the tyranny of heav'n,
 Whence I am exil'd, I had then let fall
 Weak pity's tear, and been my nature's fool.
 But, lords, I cannot so forget your cause,
 Or my own wrongs, nor would I wear a heart
 Made of such melting stuff. With noiseless
 tread 820

The kneeling suppliant I approach'd, and mark'd
 His agony of soul, whilst from his brow
 I saw large drops and gouttes of bloody sweat
 Incarnadine the dust, on which they fell.
 Bear witness, my revenge, 'twas there, e'en there,
 The very spot, on which he knelt and pray'd,
 Where now his blood, wrung out by agony
 As in atonement, dropt, on which my shrine,
 Rear'd by the wives of the uxorious king,
 Deck'd out with blazing tapers, proudly shone,
 And front to front of God's own temple stood,
 Till Asa's paricidal hand pluck'd up
 Maacha's groves and burnt my shrine to dust.
 Now hear the sequel : As I stood at gaze,
 Noting his pray'r, one of the heav'nly band
 And of the highest, GABRIEL, with his spear
 Couch'd as for combat, started forth to view,
 And, frowning, bade me take my flight with speed,
 Nor trouble that just person. Valiant peers !
 I am not one to back at his proud bidding, 840

Nor ever did I turn my face to flight
 Save in our army's universal rout,
 When all from heav'n fell headlong to the gulph:
 Such weapon as I had, this trenchant sword,
 Of adamantine proof, forthwith I drew ;
 But ere my arm could wield it, swift as thought
 I felt his spear's sharp point with forceful thrust
 Deep plung'd into my side: Staggering, amaz'd,
 I gave back, so compell'd ; he still advanc'd
 Arm'd for a second onset, when my strength
 Foil'd, though immortal, and my sight grown dim,
 My wound the whilst sore rankling, I took wing
 And hither came, on painful pinions borne,
 Your faithful servant, whether to attempt
 Fresh battle, or my present loss repair."

This said, he put his azure tunic by,
 And bar'd his wounded side, where GABRIEL'S
 spear

Had lodg'd its massy fluke ; a ghastly chasm
 Trench'd by the force of arch-angelic arm,
 And to aught else than deathless spirit death.

Fir'd at the sight, with eyes that sparkling
 blaz'd,

SATAN uprose, and thus infuriate spake :

"GABRIEL in arms ! Hah ! warriors, we are
 brav'd :

CHRIST hath his guard about him, and defies us.
 If this immortal spirit could not stand,

What shall ISCARIOT do ? Myself will forth :
 We shall then see who wields the stronger lance,
 SATAN or GABRIEL : in the fields of heav'n,
 In the mid-air, on earth, in deepest hell
 He knows my might superior, and shall rue 870
 His dastardly assault. Why not with me,
The sender rather than the sent, this strife ?
 So might he boast the contest, though subdu'd.
 The scars by this sharp sword in battle dealt,
 Are the best honors GABRIEL hath to vaunt ;
 The brightest laurels on his brow are those
 I planted, when in equal fight I deign'd
 To measure spears with such inferior foe.
 Doth GABRIEL think God's favor can reverse
 Immutable pre-eminence, and raise 880
 His menial sphere to that, in which I shone
 Son of the morning ? Doth he vainly hope,
 Exil'd from heav'n, we left our courage there,
 Or lost it in our fall, or that hell's fires
 Have parch'd and wither'd our shrunk sinews up ?
 Delusive hope ! the warrior's nerve is strung
 By exercise, by pain, by glorious toil.
 The torrid clime of hell, its burning rock,
 Its gulph of liquid flames, in which we roll'd,
 Have calcin'd our strong hearts, breath'd their
 own fires 890
 Into our veins, and forg'd those nerves to steel,
 Which heav'n's calm æther, her voluptuous skies

And frequent adorations well nigh smooth'd
 To the soft flexibility of slaves,
 Till bold rebellion shook its fetters off,
 And with their clangor rais'd so brave a storm,
 That God's eternal throne rock'd to its base.
 Now break we up this council : Each disperse
 Or to his post, his pleasure, or pursuit ;
 Sufficeth for this task my single arm. 900

CHEMOS shall be reveng'd ; the public zeal
 Of MAMMON still shall be our theme of praise ;
 Nor shall ISCARIOT'S nightly plot be foil'd
 By intervening angels ; nor these priests,
 Whose seats we fill, and whose allies we are,
 Fail of their victim, or find us remiss
 To second them in this our common league
 And joint emprise against the pow'rs of heav'n."

'Twas said ; the princes of th' assembly rose
 In reverence to his will ; the legion round 910
 Smote on their shields the signal of assent.
 Tow'ring he stood, the majesty of hell ;
 Dark o'er his brows thick clouds of vengeance
 roll'd....

Thunder was in his voice....his eye shot fire,
 And loud he call'd for buckler and for spear ;
 These bold AZAZEL bore, enormous weight,
 For Atlantean spirit proper charge ;
 With eager grasp he seiz'd the tow'ring mast,
 And shook it like a twig ; then with a frown,

That aw'd the stoutest heart, gave sign for all 920
Straight to disperse, and vanish'd from their
sight.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

A general review of Christ's agony in the garden : His disciples, who are ordered to watch, fall asleep : Christ prays apart ; he awakens them, and warns them to watch, lest they enter into temptation. Satan arrives, and takes post near the spot where Christ is praying in his agony. He is discovered by Gabriel, the supporting angel : their interview described. Christ approaches, and reproving Satan, by the word of power, casts him to the ground, disabled and in torments. Judas now advances with an armed company ; betrays his Master with a kiss : Christ is seized and carried away to the palace of the high priest. Satan, unable to rise, laments over his disconsolate condition : He is discovered by Mammon, who consoles him and assists in raising him from the ground. Satan testifies to the power and divinity of Christ—feels a presentiment of his impending doom, and having delivered his last injunctions to Mammon, is lifted from the earth by a stormy gust and carried through the air out of sight of that evil spirit, who, terrified by the fate of his chief, turns to flight and escapes.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK IV.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

O MOUNT of Agony ! water'd with tears
From my Redeemer's eyes, and by his knees
Pressing thy turf, made sacred as the ground
Where ev'n the chosen shepherd might not stand
But with unsandal'd feet ! Ah ! where is now
That purifying Angel me to cleanse
From this vile world, that so I may approach,
Though but in thought, with a right sp'rit re-
new'd,

Thy hallow'd solitude ? Lo ! where the Lord
Sorrowing retires apart : Where are the three
Stationed to guard his sacred privacy ?
Stand they aloof, as their forefathers stood,
When from the midst of darkness, cloud and fire,
JEHOVAH thunder'd out of Sinai's mount ?
Ah, no ! within that olive grove they lie [guard.
Stretch'd on the ground, a drowsy slumb'ring
And could ye not, ye sleepers, watch one hour
For such a master ? Oh ! what heart could taste
Of rest or peace, whilst his was rack'd with pain ?

Was it the sighs his suffering virtue breath'd 20
Into the air of sad Gethsemane,
That so entranc'd your senses ? Or was he,
The strength'ning angel, sent from Heav'n to
shield

The Saviour's anguish from all human eyes,
And veil the mystery of that awful hour ?
Then was that angry cup, full mix'd and red
From God's right hand, presented to his lips :
The bitter essence of orig'nal sin,
With every life-destroying extract, drawn
From man's corruption since, were there infus'd,
Compounded and resolv'd into that draught,
Mix'd by the hand of death, and drugg'd in hell.
The coward, shrinking under fortune's blows,
With desperate lip hath oft-times drank and died ;
'Tis refuge, 'tis desertion from a post
He dare defend no longer—'tis the hope,
False, fruitless hope, of a perpetual sleep,
When he hath bottom'd that Lethæan cup :
But our Redeemer's portion was not such ;
Horrors and heart-dissolving woes and pangs,
That mock imagination's scope, and stretch
The heart's strong cordage, till it bursts asunder
And leaves the mind a wreck, these were the drugs,
That brew'd that cup of agony, which God
Now tender'd as the wrath-atoning draught
For a revolted world ! Mysterious act !

The Father sacrifice the Son belov'd !
The just, to spare the unjust, lay the rod
Upon the guiltless head ! Shall all offend,
And One atone for all ? One Victim bear 50
The accumulated load of punishment,
The mass of vengeance, that amazing whole,
Which each-partic'lar sin had pil'd in store,
And that devoted sacrifice a Lamb
Pure, without spot or blemish ? O my soul !
Beware, nor to that tabernacle press,
Where clouds and darkness canopy thy God.
Lo ! where the Saviour kneels ; he looks around
For some to succour, to support—some friend,
Whose sympathizing eye might beam upon
him, 60
And, with a moment's glance of pity, cheer
His desolated spirit. All around
Is vacant horror, solitary, dark :
The partners of his heart, the chosen few,
The friends, who should have watch'd, are wrapt
in sleep....
Insensible, supine, oblivious sleep ;
Woes multiplied by woe, and that the worst,
Ingratitude, the sharpest fang that gnaws
Man's bleeding bosom. In this sad extreme,
His soul, revolting from the noisome draught,
With eyes to heav'n uplifted, and a sigh
Which shew'd that human weakness then o'er-
power'd

His soul's diviner part—"Abba !" he cries,
 " Father, all things are possible to thee,
 Remove this cup !" Then bows his patient head
 And qualifies the pray'r—" Yet not my will
 But thine be done !" No voice from heav'n re-
 plies :

All nature sleeps in silence still as death,
 As if the planets in their spheres had paus'd
 To watch the trembling balance, on whose point
 The fortunes of this globe suspended hung—
 Its ruin or redemption, death or life, [blow

'Twas then the strength'ning angel dealt the
 That put the hovering spy of hell to flight,
 Seen of our Lord in ambush where he lay,
 And now the Mourner rises from the earth,
 On which he knelt, and a few paces moves,
 Pensive and slow, to find his station'd friends,
 He finds them not as friends upon the watch,
 Not as God's faithful soldiers should be found,
 But at their length stretch'd out in lazy sleep,
 With folded arms supine. Rous'd by his voice,
 They stare, they start, confounded and amaz'd,
 " Could ye not watch one hour ?" the Sufferer
 cries :

" Watch, for the foe of man is near at hand ;
 Pray, lest ye fall into the tempter's snare ;
 The sp'rit is ready, but the flesh is weak."
 So warn'd, he leaves them with this mild rebuke.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 113

A second time he seeks the dismal dell,
Again he prays remission of his woe, 100
And deprecates the agonizing cup :
Meanwhile his drowsy centinels perceive
A langour, which their senses must obey,
And down they sink, their leaden eye-balls clos'd
As in a death-like trance. **A**gain he comes—
Again he calls, a second warning gives,
And so departs.—Now **SATAN** on the wing
Swift as a fiery meteor rides the air, [war :
With shield and spear arm'd at all points for
Then down at once, with huge **Titanian** bulk,
Plumb down he lights upon the solid soil,
Hard by th' angelic post : **E**arth felt the shock,
And, trembling to her centre, inly groan'd.
Nor did his haughty courage deign to crouch,
On lurk with lion-watch, but firm of foot,
Erect and confident in arms he stood,
As one whose prowess all advantage scorn'd
And mean surprise of an unguarded foe.
Such arts to weaker spirits he resign'd ;
He of his former self felt no decay, 120
Or, feeling, scorn'd confession ; for his pride
Still deem'd that heav'n, though lost, contain'd
no peer
To mate with him in hardihood and proof,
Save only the Almighty ; to such height
Of arrogance had pow'r long time usurp'd

Over the Gentile nations, and the sight
 Of God's own Son, now, as he falsely deem'd,
 Vanquish'd and prostrate, swell'd his impious
 heart.

Our blessed Lord, meanwhile, having preferr'd
 For the last time his interceding prayer, 130
 Summon'd his strength, and, conscious that the
 hour

Was come which finish'd or revok'd the task
 Of man's redemption from the powers of hell,
 Whose representative hard by at hand
 Stood eager to arrest the forfeit prize,
 Put forth his hand, and as he took the cup,
 SATAN, who stood spectator of the deed,
 Started aghast! cold tremor shook his joints...
 His threat'ning spear now droop'd, and his broad
 shield,

So proudly borne aloft, weigh'd down his arm
 Slack and unnerv'd; confusion seiz'd his heart,
 And his high courage quell'd. This GABRIEL
 saw,

Yet left he not his post till CHRIST had drain'd,
 The cup mysterious; to its lowest dregs
 He drank it; now convulsion shook the fiend;
 Death shriek'd amain, and through his hollow
 ribs

Drove his own ebon dart with desp'rate rage.
 Bitter the draught and hateful to the taste,

But immortality had crown'd the cup, [forth,
And Light and Life, on phœnix wings, sprung
From the foul dregs, in new-born glories bright.
GABRIEL, who knew that by this solemn act
Thus happily perform'd his charge expir'd,
Now turn'd away in search of that fierce sp'rit,
Whom thro' the darkling covert he had seen,
Whilst by the side of God's afflicted Son
Minist'ring he stood. Right well he knew the
form

And towering port of hell's terrific king ;
Nor had the dire confusion and dismay
Of that fell dæmon scap'd the angelic glance.
Him now within a gloomy dell retir'd
To further distance, wrapt as it should seem
In pensive thought, the guardian seraph spy'd.
In the same moment SATAN's ghastly eye
Glanc'd on his foe : bright in cærulean arms
Heav'n's champion shone, high o'er his crested
helm

The arch-angelic plume triformed wav'd,
Ensign of thron'd state and high command.
The grisly monarh gnash'd his teeth for spite
To find himself encounter'd at such odds ; 170
His foe fresh blooming in immortal youth,
Vigorous, in heav'nly-temper'd armour brac'd ;
Himself at this ill hour surpris'd...his strength
As by enchantment blasted, and that voice,

Which in the ears of all hell's princes vouch'd
Such bold achievements, shrunk from its high
pitch

To feeble murmurs, and weak whining sighs.

So when on Zama's plain the rival chiefs,
Rome's consul and the Punic captain, met
To parley in mid-way 'twixt either camp, 180
The war-worn veteran, blighted and defac'd
By wint'ry marches over noisome fens
And snows on mountains pil'd, with envious eye,
Sole relic of his toil, survey'd the form
And blooming features of his youthful foe ;
Then to his mind recalling glories past,
When his proud menace aw'd immortal Rome,
Sigh'd to reflect how far in the decline [sunk ;
From that bright morn his evening sun had
Then eyed the youth again, and in his face, 190
Shadow'd by fate, saw Carthage doom'd to fall ;
And his own glories to a foe transferr'd,
Less than his equal once...his conqu'ror now.

But 'twas not long that SATAN so endur'd,
For now the conscious sense of former deeds
Bold, though unblest, and high innate disdain
Of mean capitulation and demur
Rous'd his proud heart, like a hot courserspurr'd,
To chafe and lash his languid courage up.
Red'ning he swell'd, and gnaw'd his nether lip
For vengeance that it would not give him words

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

4

To hurl defiance on th' advancing foe :
When GABRIEL, noting his disorder'd mien,
And haggard aspect, strait bespoke the fiend :

“ Thus ever may the foe of CHRIST be found
Speechless, abash'd, struck down of Heav'n and
quell'd !

How long, malicious sp'rit, wilt thou persist
To trouble this vex'd earth ? How long to haunt
This righteous person, whose strong virtue mocks
Thy faint attempts ? Warn'd by this shame,
avaunt !

Hence, baffled Tempter ! roaming thus at large,
Thou dost but show, by melancholy proof,
That a tormented conscience never rests.” [fix'd,

As the fierce panther, through the ribs trans-
Writhes round the bloody weapon in his side,
And tugs it to and fro with foamy teeth,
Mad'ning with pain and gnashing at his wound ;
So 'gainst himself and foe alike enrag'd,
Hell's gloomy lord, by this deserved taunt
Cut to the heart, with many a hard essay 220
Struggled for voice ; at length collecting breath,
These words disdainful, though of their full tone
And energy abated, found their way :

“ GABRIEL, the brave in danger earn renown ;
True valor spares the weak ; but thou more wise
Than valiant, studiest well the safer hour,
When to come forth and wage inglorious war

'Gainst unprovided foes ; if CHEMOS then,
Or some slight Cherub, cross thy wary path,
Woe to the straggler ! if thy barbed spear 230
Can make safe tilt at his unweapon'd side.
But I, who day and night have pac'd this globe,
Found in all quarters—I, who never shunn'd,
Rather have sought thy walk, am left to roam
Free and of thee unquestion'd, from the hour
When on the confines of this new-made world
We parlied under Eden's shady fence,
To th' instant now, when faint and ill at ease,
Unwarlike angel, thou hast found me here
Nerveless, and little more than match for thee."

To whom the indignant virtue thus reply'd :
" If SATAN here is found in evil plight, [wiles,
He's found of me unsought. Thine own dark
Degen'rate sp'rit, and heav'n's all-ruling hand
Have cast thee in my way. Must I turn off
From duty's road direct, because forsooth
A wounded adder hisses in my path ?
Why didst thou press into this place of prayer,
This hallow'd solitude, where CHRIST hath
breath'd

A charm, that withers up thy blasted strength ?
Could'st thou not learn, by late experience
taught,

There is a sphere about the Son of God,
In which no sp'rit like thee accurst can draw

His breath blaspheming ? At a word begone !
Though with my foot I could have spurn'd thee
hence,

I tread not on the fall'n ; nor do I vaunt
Conquest of thee, that to a mightier arm,
Rebel to God, to God's own Son thou ow'st—
To CHRIST, not GABRIEL ; nor shalt thou alone
Stoop to his name, but every idol god, 260
And ev'ry pow'r of darkness with their prince,
And sin hell-born, and thy foul offspring death."

Whereto, by these prophetic words appall'd,
SATAN, with taunting argument, reply'd :

"Since this angelic form, from death exempt,
Sometimes shall yield to aches and transient
pains,

And natural ailments for awhile endur'd,
What wonder, if ethereal sp'rit like me,
Pent in this atmosphere, and fain to breathe
The lazy fogs of this unwholesome earth, 270
Pine for his native clime ? What if he droop,
Worn out with care and toil ? Wert thou as I
Driv'n to and fro, and by God's thunder hurl'd
From heav'n's high ramparts, would that silken
form

Abide the tossing on hell's fiery lake ?
Hadst thou, like me, travers'd the vast profound
Of ancient night, and beat the weary wing
Through stormy Chaos, voyage rude as this

Would ruffle those fine plumes. I've kept my
course

Through hurricanes, the least of which let loose
On this firm globe would winnow it to dust...

Snap like a weaver's thread the mighty chain,

That links it to heav'n's adamant floor,

And whirl it through the infinite of space.

And what hast thou, soft cherub, done the whilst?

What are thy labors? What hast thou achiev'd?

Heav'n knows no winter...there no tempests

howl ;

To breathe perpetual spring...to sleep supine

On flowery beds of amaranth and rose,

Voluptuous slavery, was GABRIEL'S choice : 290

His bosom never drew the indignant sigh,

That rent my heart, when, call'd to morning

hymn,

I paid compulsive homage at God's throne,

Warbling feign'd hallelujahs to his praise.

Spirits of abject mould, and such art thou,

May call this easy service ; for they love

Ignoble ease ; to me the fulsome task

Was bitterest slavery, and though I fell,

I fell opposing ; exil'd both from heav'n,

Freedom and I shar'd the same glorious fall. 300

Go back, then, to thy drudgery of praise,

Practise new canticles and tune thy throat

To flattery's fawning pitch ; leave me my groans,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 121

**Leave me to teach these echoes how to curse ;
Here let me lie and make this rugged stone
My couch, my canopy this stormy cloud,
That rolls stern winter o'er my fenceless head ;
'Tis freedom's privilege...nor tribute owes,
Nor tribute pays to heav'n's despotic king."**

**Thus whilst he spake, the Saviour of mankind,
New ris'n from pray'r, drew nigh ; whereat the
fiend,**

**Or ere the awful presence met his eye,
Shivering as one by sudden fever seiz'd,
Turn'd deadly pale ; then fell to earth convuls'd,
Dire were the yells he vented, fierce the throes
That writh'd his tortur'd frame, whilst through
the seams**

**And chinks, that in his jointed armor gap'd,
Blue sulph'rous flames in livid flashes burst,
So hot the hell within his fuel'd heart ;
Which like a furnace sev'n times heated rag'd,
Meanwhile the winged Messenger of heaven,
GABRIEL, with horror and amazement fix'd,
Stood motionless behind his'orbed shield.
Not so the Saviour ; he, with look compos'd
And stedfast, noting the disastrous plight
Of that tormented fiend, these words address'd :**

**" SATAN, thou see'st the serpent's primal curse
At length falls heavy on thy bruised head ;
When man lost paradise, by thee betray'd,**

This was thy doom, deceiver ; and altho' 330
 Ages have roll'd on ages since, yet God,
 Who from eternal to eternal lives
 Blessed for evermore, computes not time [long.
 As thou, whose mis'ry makes short years seem
 Yet was the interim thine, and thou, who first
 Brought'st sin into the world, hast reign'd in sin:
 Thou hadst the power of death, but I thro' death
 Am destin'd to destroy that power and thee.
 And now, my hour is come, I go to death,
 That all thro' me may live ; therefore, begone !
 Get thee behind me ! thou hast now no part
 On earth ; thy dwelling is prepar'd in hell :
 There, when we meet, expect to meet thy doom."

This said, the fiend reply'd not but with groans;
 Nor staid the angel longer than to turn
 One last sad look upon his prostrate foe,
 Then flew to heav'n. The Saviour bent his steps
 In search of his disciples ; them he found
 Wrapt as before in sleep. "Sleep on," he cry'd,
 "And henceforth take your rest : It is enough:
 The hour is come. Behold ! the Son of Man:
 Into the hands of sinners is betray'd :
 Rise, let us go ! The traitor is at hand."
 And lo ! while yet he spake, a mingled crew,
 Arm'd and unarm'd, approach ; before them all
 JUDAS, advancing, thus bespeaks the throng :
 "Whom I shall kiss is He, the CHRIST : Him
 seize

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**And in safe keeping hold." Upon the word
He gives the trait'rous greeting, and exclaims,
"Hail, Master!" When at once the swarming
crowd 360**

**Rush in a space, then stand in circle round,
Like blood-hounds held at bay, their eager eyes
Fix'd on his face, which to behold they rear
Their flaming torches, whilst the prospect round
Glares with the ruddy blaze ; a ghastly troop,
Like that dread chorus, which the tragic bard
Pour'd on the scene, when the Athenian wives
Dropt their abortive burthens with affright,
To see their snaky locks and fiery brands**

**Kindle in Phlegethon's sulphureous waves ; 370
So glares that haggard crew ; in front they see
Jesus in conscious majesty unmov'd ;
Behind him, to some little space withdrawn,
PETER, and JAMES, and JOHN, the chosen Three,
Small band ; but in their Leader's pow'r a host
Invincible, 'gainst whom whole armies leagu'd
Were but as chaff before the whirlwind's blast,
Had he so will'd. But now, with accent firm,
"Whom seek ye ? he demands. They answer
make,**

**"Jesus of Nazareth." "I am the man," 380
Jesus replies—"He, whom ye seek, is found."
His air, his utterance, and that voice divine
Which could have arm'd heav'n's legions in his
cause,**

Or gulph'd them to the centre at a word,
 Swift as the vollied thunder smote their hearts,
 And hurl'd them to the ground. Headlong they
 fell

With hideous crash, nor ever thence had ris'n,
 Had not his gracious purpose so decreed
 For man's redemption. Up they rise from earth,
 And in like manner to the same demand 390
 A second time make answer ; he repeats—

“ I told you, and ye heard, that I am He :
 If therefore me ye seek, let these depart.”
 Then burst the chidden zeal of PETER forth ;
 Arm'd with a sword, he rush'd upon the throng,
 And at the foremost aim'd a random blow,
 That gash'd the caitiff's head, but miss'd the life.

“ Put up thy sword, rash man !” the Saviour
 cries—

“ Did I want rescue, would I ask of thee,
 With all my Father's angels at command ? 400
 No ! let me do His will and drink His cup :
 And you, that here encompass me about,
 As 'twere a felon ye came out to take,
 With swords and staves, suffer thus far, behold !
 The wound his weapon makes, my touch shall
 heal—

[sword,
 'Tis done ! Know all, that they, who take the
 Shall perish by the sword. What needs this stir,
 This midnight plotting and this traitor's kiss,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 125

These staves, these torches, and this arm'd array
To make one harmless, peaceful man your prize?
You saw me daily in my public walks ;
Freely we commun'd, for you harm'd me not ;
You heard me in the temple ; for I taught
In very zeal the simple way of truth,
Lab'ring full hard to turn your hearts to God :
If this were my offence, why not arrest
Your Preacher in the act, and drag to death
Him, who would fain have train'd you in the road
To life eternal ? Never on the poor
Turn'd I my back ; I courted not the rich ; 420
Were this my fault, in the broad face of day
Ye might have smitten me, and earn'd the praise
Of the proud Pharisee and braggart Scribe.
I fed the hungry, and I heal'd your sick—
I succour'd the tormented and possest ;
Are these the heinous acts for which I die ?
In field, in city, in frequented ways
The wretched flock'd around—if these be crimes,
Why is their punishment so long reserv'd
To this dark hour of night ? The sun himself
Witness'd my doings, so might he my death.
But see ! my followers are dispers'd and fled,
And I stand in your peril here alone :
No need to fear him, who makes no defence ;
Conduct me to my doom : God's will be done !"
This said, their sacrilegious hands they laid

Upon his sacred person : He in the midst,
With meek composure and submitted look,
March'd slowly onward, as they led the way
To the proud dome of CAIAPHAS, high-priest
Of MOLOCH than of God more fitly call'd.

Oh, ye hard hearts ! was this the Paschal
Lamb,

Ye worse than pagan butchers, whom ye call'd
Pure and unspotted for your bloody feast ?
Well did your law-giver decree this day
A record and memorial to be kept
Throughout your generations to all time ;
A memorable day, a noted feast
Your stubborn incredulity hath made it.
To you a day of darkness and disgrace ; 450
To us Salvation's glorious dawn—to us
By our great Captain led, the Lord of Life,
Who through the darksome avenue of death
And depths mysterious of the mazy grave,
Holding the clue of prophecy in hand,
Unravell'd all the ways of Providence,
And to our view set ope the golden gates
Of paradise regain'd, whence light and life
And bliss eternal beam on all mankind ;
For all, who with their lips confess the Lord,
And in their hearts believe that from the dead
God in his pow'r hath rais'd him, shall be sav'd.

Meanwhile the prince of hell, whom CHRIST
had left

Rolling in torments on the stony rock,
 Mad as Leviathan, when tempest-wreck'd
 Flound'ring he lies upon the shoaly beach,
 Now to one last and desperate effort driv'n,
 Straining each nerve with many a dolorous groan,
 Half his huge length had rear'd. His right
 hand grasp'd

His spear, the other on his buckler propp'd 470
 Pillow'd his head, raging with pain and thro'ts
 Black as the night around him : To arise
 And stand surpass'd his power ; in vain he
 spread

His feath'ry vans to raise him in the air !
 About him all the ground, with azure plumes
 Beat from his shatter'd pinions, was bestrewn.
 Despair now seiz'd him—now too late he rued
 His blasphemies and bold rebellious taunts
 'Gainst heav'n's Omnipotent, his Judge incens'd.
 Hopeless of mercy, now he curs'd his doom 480
 Of immortality ; and as he roll'd
 His haggard eyes in night, hell's flaming gulph,
 Terrific vision, seem'd to burst upon him,
 With treble horrors charg'd ; then with a sigh,
 That strain'd his heaving cors'let, he breath'd
 forth

In murmuring lamentations these sad words :

“ Ah ! who will lift me from this iron bed,
 On which, Prometheus-like, for ever link'd

And rivetted by dire necessity
 I'm doom'd to lie, and wail the cruel boon 490
 Of immortality, my baneful fate ? [vade
 O earth, earth, earth ! Cannot my groans per
 Thy stony heart t' embowel me alive
 Under this rock, before to-morrow's sun
 Find me here weltering in the sordid dust,
 A spectacle of scorn to all my host,
 Wont to behold in me their kingly chief?
 Will not some pitying earthquake gulph me
 down

To where the everlasting fountains sleep;
 That in those wat'ry caverns I might slake 500
 These fires, that shrivel my parch'd sinews up?
 Ah ! whither shall I turn ! who will unbrace ?
 This scalding mail, that burns my tortur'd breast
 Worse than the shirt of Nessus ? Oh ! for pity,
 Grant me a moment's interval of ease,
 Avenging, angry Deity ! Draw back [arm'd
 Thy red right hand, that with the lightning
 Thrust to my heart makes all my boiling blood
 Hiss in my veins ; or if thou wilt destroy
 Whom thou hast vanquish'd, terminate these
 feuds 510

'Twixt good and evil—thee, and me ; reduce
 This incorruptible to mould'ring dust,
 Make Death a parricide, and so conclude
 Me and my sufferings and my sins at once,

But 'twill not be. Happy I might have been—
 Immortal I must be. God can create
 Nothing but bliss ; I made the pains I feel.
 Sorrow had no existence—death no name,
 Till I lost heav'n ; to be, was to be blest ;
 And beings blest could never cease to be. 520
 This earth and man its 'habitant were good,
 Till envy, pride, rebellion, in my heart
 Engend'ring, marr'd God's perfect work with sin ;
 And but for sin the universe were heav'n.
 So am I author of the hell within me.
 And these tormenting fires God cannot quench ;
 For that would be to turn from what he is,
 Parent of good, and to become like me,
 Patron and friend of evil. Reas'ning thus
 I must renounce all hope of future peace, 530
 And wage eternal enmity with God,
 Whom longer to oppose I now despair,
 And under whose strong hand, weigh'd down
 to earth,
 Prostrate, confounded, I can rise no more.
 Must I be ever thus ? Must these fierce pangs,
 Or worse, if worse can be, torment me ever ?
 Are there no means to make a truce with
 heav'n ?
 Submission, penitence, atonement, pray'rs
 And intercessions—Oh ! fallacious, vain,
 Impracticable terms ! Can pride shed tears, 540

For shame and sorrow to be thus surpris'd ;
For MAMMON, ever on the foot by night,
Had spy'd him thro' the gloom, and thus began :

“ What ails thee, prince of air, that here thou
liest

On the dull earth, not resting it should seem
From victory, but vanquish'd and o'erthrown ?”

“ Vanquish'd, alas ! and in the dust o'er-
thrown 600

By God's all-pow'rful Son,” SATAN reply'd,
“ Too sure I am ; and how it wrings this heart
So to be found of thee words cannot speak.

Yet thou of all the spirits heav'n hath lost
Art he, of whom my pride hath least to fear ;
For thou wilt not as others gall my spleen
With scorn and taunting : Thou, a friendly
chief,

Hast pity for the sorrows of a friend ;
To thee my valour and deserts are known ;
For thou wert ever nearest where I fought, 610
In front of danger on the battle's edge ;

Thou know'st the hazard and the chance of war,
And with what malice fortune thwarts our best,
Our bravest efforts : Scarr'd thyself with wounds,
Thou from the wounded wilt not turn aside ;
Therefore, O MAMMON, as my hand to thee
Were present, didst thou need it, so to me,
Thy sovereign in distress, reach forth thine
hand,

And, if thou canst, upraise me from this fall ;
If thou canst not, let not my armies know. 620
Their leader's fate—be mindful of my fame,
And bury this sad secret in thy breast."

He said, nor need had he of further suit,
For MAMMON now had put forth all his strength
To raise him from the ground ; in his strong
grasp

He seiz'd his giant limbs in armour clad
Of adamant and gold, a ponderous wreck :
Earth trembled with the shock ; dire were the
groans

Hell's monarch vented....horrible the pains
That rack'd his stiffen'd joints ; yet on he toil'd
Till by heav'n's sufferance, rather than by aid
Of arm angelic, once again he rear'd
His huge Titanian stature to the skies,
And stood ; yet not as late with look erect
And lofty mein. Ruin was in his face ;
Sordid and soil'd with ignominious dust
His robe imperial, and his azure wings
And glossy locks, that o'er his shoulders curl'd,
Dishevell'd now, and in like tatter'd trim
With vessel tempest-torn, or by the force 640
Of engines weigh'd from bottom of the deep,
Founder'd in creek or harbour, where she lay
Gulph'd in the slimy ooze ; when MAMMON, thus :
"Joy to our gallant leader ! Once again

With firm foot planted on the subject earth
We stand as sp'rits by our strength redeem'd
Erect and dauntless. Wherefore droops that eye,
As it would root itself into the soil,
From which with vigor new restor'd you rise
Antæus-like, indignant of defeat ? 650
Oft, when in search of gold or silver ore
In earth's metallic veins, I've labor'd long
And hard, in damp and darksome caverns pent,
Mining the solid rock, at length to light
And the free air emerg'd, I've found my limbs
Stiffen with cramps, or with cold ague numb'd :
Yet never did my patient courage droop
Or slack its gainful toil. I am not apt,
When wealth or glory can be bought with pain,
To stagger at the terms ; and if it please 660
Heav'n's Monarch in his vengeance to attach
To this eternal being eternal pain,
Good hope, as poisons may be sheath'd by use,
So long familiarity with pain
May draw its sting, and habitude convert
Its hostile property to friendly ease.
But thy great heart perhaps is rent with grief,
Of pain disdainful as of lesser ill : [heaven,
And wherefore grieve ? Our joys were lost with
Our passions all revers'd, our natures chang'd,
Virtues to vices, amity to hate ; [hell
Deeds, that in heav'n had been our shame, in

Become our glory ; and whilst the world endures,
 Whilst evil is to good oppos'd, we keep
 The fight at doubtful issue, oft-times win
 The glorious field, and triumph over God.

Why did I tempt ISCARIOT to betray
 His guiltless master ? 'Twas not that I lov'd
 The traitor ; no, the treason was my joy ;
 I laugh at fools in their own folly caught : 680
 The wretch I tempted, him I shall destroy,
 And like a worn-out weapon cast him by ;
 He shall not live to see his master's fall,
 And for the sorry purchase of his sin
 He shall but touch the adder's sting and die :
 So much for JUDAS ! Thus at once I slay
 Two victims, and refine upon revenge." [cheer'd
 To whom, with clouded brow, and nothing
 By this discourse, hell's gloomy power reply'd :

" MAMMON, you well describe the rueful change
 Wrought in us by our overthrow from heav'n,
 And for such solace as in thought you find
 Pondering the sad eternity of pain,
 My argument shall never be employ'd
 To make that little less ; but when you vaunt
 ISCARIOT'S treason and th' impending fall
 Of that just person, now before the bar
 Of envious judges, who shall doom his death,
 You vaunt a deed, which, though th' elect of hell
 Jointly with me advis'd, brings on us all 700

Ruin, with loss of empire, and all hope
So quenches, nought can stand us now instead
But patience and your reconciling rules
To wout our natures to eternal pain.
My potency you know, and can you think
Less than the hand of God could hurl me down
To misery like this ? It must be God,
Who speaks in CHRIST, the father in the Son :
Though meek, Almighty he controls the world,
And me, the world's late master ; he destroys
Sin, my begotten, and sin's offspring, Death.
Oh ! that I never had approach'd him more,
Foil'd in my first temptation. Now, ev'n now,
I feel a nature in me, not mine own,
That is my master, and against my will
Enforces truths prophetic from my tongue,
Making me rev'rence whom in heart I hate :
I feel that now, though lifted from the ground,
I stand or move or speak but as he wills,
By influence, not by freedom : I perceive 790
These exhalations, that the night breathes on me,
Are loaded with the vaporous steams of hell ;
I scent them in the air, and well I know
The angel of destruction is abroad.
I cannot fly from fate ; the man foredoom'd
To bruise my head is CHRIST ; the time is come,
The prophecy is full ; exil'd from hence,
As first from heav'n, my reign on earth is o'er,

And my last care is for those hapless friends,
 The partners of my fall, when I am gone 730
 Left like a headless trunk. Warn them to fly
 Impending ruin ; sure I am, when CHRIST
 Breathes forth his sacred sp'rit into the air,
 His dying gasp shall blow them like a spell
 To the four winds of heav'n. Let them be gone
 In time, and ply the wing ; there's shelter yet
 In this wide world for them. Though I must
 hence,

They may abide ; and though their names be lost,
 Their altars levell'd, and their idols maim'd,
 Yet shall their arts and offices endure, 740
 Ther influences still shall draw the hearts
 Of many ; sin shall not at once secede
 From earth, nor darkness wholly yield to light.
 To thee, auspicious sp'rit, whose potent arm
 Hath rais'd me from the ground, I can assure
 A longer term of residence and power :
 Thy empire in earth's inmost centre roots—
 Thy influence circulates through all her veins.
 Nor earth alone, but ocean wafts to thee
 Continual tribute ; commerce hails thy name ;
 In thee war triumphs—thee fair peace adores,
 And gilds the feathers of her dove with gold,
 To dedicate to thee her worldly god—
 Thee, the last foe whom CHRIST shall chase
 from earth.”

So spake the parting fiend in his last hour;
Prophetic, father though he were of lies.
To him the inferior dæmon answer none
Attempted; but in ghastly silence stood
Gazing with horror on his chieftain's face,
That chang'd all hues by fits, as when the north,
With nitrous vapours charg'd, convulsive shoots
Its fiery darts athwart the trembling pole,
Making heav'n's vault a canopy of blood;
So o'er the visage of the exorcis'd fiend
Alternate gleams like meteors came and went,
And ever and anon he beat his breast,
That quick and short with lab'ring pulses heav'd.
One piteous look he upward turn'd...one sigh
From his sad heart he fain had sent to heav'n;
But ere the hopeless messenger could leave
His quiv'ring lips, by sudden impulse seiz'd,
He finds himself uplifted from the earth;
His azure wings, to sooty black now chang'd,
In wide expanse from either shoulder stretch
For flight involuntary. Up he springs
Whirl'd in a fiery vortex round and round;
As when the Lybian wilderness, caught up
In sandy pillar by the eddying winds,
Moves horrible, the grave of man and beast;
Him thus ascending the forked lightning smites
With sidelong volly, whilst loud thunders rock
Heav'n's echoing vault, when all at once, behold!

Caught in the stream of an impetuous gust
High in mid-air, swift on the level wing
Northward he shoots, and like a comet leaves
Long fiery track behind, speeding his course
Straight to the realms of Chaos and old Night,
Hell-bound, and to Tartarean darkness doom'd.

His sad associate, left on earth, look'd up,
And with like conscious terror eyed his flight ;
As when the merchant, trembling for his freight,
Looks seaward, from some promontory's top,
And thence descries his gallant bark a wreck
Driving at mercy of the winds and waves
Full on the rocky shoal, her certain grave ;
Then, having bid farewell to all his hope,
In this one bottom stor'd, now lost to sight,
Turns with a sigh aside, and o'er the strand
With heavy heart takes homeward his slow way.

So sigh'd the fiend ; and for his own sad fate
Trembling, yet fearful to attempt the wing,
Slunk cowering off, veil'd in the shades of night.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

This book, proposing to treat of the trial and condemnation of Christ, opens with an invocation to the Evangelists, the sacred historians of that event. Christ, brought before the priests and elders in council, accused by the witnesses, interrogated by Caiaphas, persists in keeping silence, till being solemnly called upon to declare himself, he answers by an affirmation of the truth. Instantly all voices are let loose upon him, accusing him of blasphemy, and pronouncing him worthy of death: He is delivered over to mockery and insult. The Jews resolve to arraign him before Pilate on the following morning. He turns and looks upon Peter, who, according to prediction, had three several times denied him. The sorrow and contrition of that disciple is described; he retires apart to bewail his crime and supplicate forgiveness. His prayer and confession in the temple-porch. The council of the Jews resort to Pilate next morning, and appeal against Christ. He informs them, that, by the Roman law, no judgment can be given, till the accused is confronted with his accusers and heard in his defence. Now commences the trial of Christ before Pilate, who, finding nothing worthy of death in that just Person, refers him to Herod, as belonging to his jurisdiction. Herod, after mocking him, arrays him in a gorgeous robe, and in that apparel sends him back to Pilate. He again appears in the judgment-hall, before Pilate, who, after many fruitless efforts to save him, the Jews still urging him by their clamorous importunity to crucify him, finding no other way to prevent a tumult of the people, after declaring himself innocent of the blood of Jesus, by the ceremony of washing his hands before the multitude, delivers him to be crucified.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK V.

THE CONDEMNATION OF CHRIST.

YE sacred Guides, whose plain, unvarnish'd
page,

Penn'd by the hand of Truth, records the scene,
Where CHRIST before the bar of impious men,
Patient of all their scorn, arraign'd, betray'd,
And of his own abandon'd, silent stands,
You I invoke ; so from the same pure source,
Whence my faith flows, shall also flow my song ;
Not idly babbling, like that shallow rill
Trickling at foot of the Parnassian Mount ;
But deep, serene, to hallow'd airs attun'd : 10
Aid me from heav'n, where now before God's
throne

In evangelic attributes ye stand,
Six-wing'd and thick bespangled o'er with eyes,
Ranging all points before you and behind,
Seraphic minstrels, chanting day and night
Your ceaseless hallelujah's to the name
Of Him, who was, and is, and is to come.
Led by your hand, with trembling step I press

The sacred ground, which my Redeemer trode,
 Now like a lamb to slaughter led, and now 20
 Pendent (Oh horror!) on the bloody tree ;
 And whilst to tell his sacrifice of love,
 His soul-dissolving agonies, I strive,
 My heart melts into sorrows deep as those
 When the sad daughters of Jerusalem
 Water'd his passage to the cross with tears.

Musing my pious theme, as fits a bard
 Far onward in the wint'ry track of age,
 I shun the Muses' haunts, nor dalliance hold
 With fancy by the way, but travel on 30
 My mournful road, a pilgrim grey with years ;
 One that finds little favour with the world,
 Yet thankful for its least benevolence
 And patient of its taunts ; for never yet
 Lur'd I the pop'lar ear with gibing tales,
 Or sacrific'd the modesty of song,
 Harping lewd madrigals at drunken feasts,
 To make the vulgar sport, and win their shout.
 Me rather the still voice delights, the praise
 Whisper'd, not publish'd by fame's braying
 trump : 40

Be thou my herald, Nature ! Let me please
 The sacred few—let my remembrance live
 Embosom'd by the virtuous and the wise ;
 Make me, O Heav'n ! by those who love thee,
 lov'd :

So when the widow's and the children's tears
 Shall sprinkle the cold dust, in which I sleep
 Pompless and from a scornful world withdrawn,
 The laurel, which its malice rent, shall shoot
 So water'd into life, and mantling throw
 Its verdant honours o'er my grassy tomb. 50

Here in mid-way of my unfinish'd course,
 Doubtful of future time whilst now I pause
 To fetch new breath and trim my waning lamp,
 Fountain of Life, if I have still ador'd
 Thy mercy, and remember'd Thee with awe
 E'en in my mirth, in the gay prime of youth—
 So conscience witnesses, the mental scribe,
 That registers my errors, quits me here—
 Propitious Pow'r, support me ! and if death,
 Near at the farthest, meditates the blow 60
 To cut me short in my prevented task,
 Spare me a little, and put by the stroke,
 Till I recount his overthrow, and hail
 Thy Son victorious rising from the grave.

Now to that dismal scene return, my thoughts !
 Where CHRIST, in midst of an irreverent crew,
 Usher'd by torches through the darkling streets,
 And now at summit of the holy Mount
 Arriv'd, before the pontiff's lofty gate,
 Waiting the call of impious pride, attends. 70
 The halls and lobbies vomit forth a swarm
 Of saucy servitors, with idiot stare

Gazing the wond'rous Man, and venting loud.
Their coward mockeries : He stands unmov'd.
Great is the stir within, and on the post
Through all the palace runs the buzzing news
Of this great Prophet's capture, circling round
With ever new enlargement of strange sights
And fearful doings in the garden, seen
Of those who took him. CAIAPHAS meanwhile
Summons the temple-chiefs, elders, and scribes,
A hasty Sanhedrim : No longer now
With stately step in measur'd pace they march ;
Huddled together by their fears they flock,
They cluster in a throng, safest so deem'd,
And fill the council seats. In speech abrupt
And brief their hierarch the cause expounds
Of their so sudden meeting—CHRIST is seiz'd...
The Prophet, whom they dreaded, is in hold...
Th' Enchanter, who, by league with Beelzebub,
Scar'd them with magic spells, is at their door ;
Now is the time to put his art to proof—
Now is the moment to decide if thus
Their unreveal'd Messiah shall appear
After long promise in this abject state
A shackled pris'ner, or a conquering king.
"Admit him!" with faint voice some two or three
Of the least timorous cry, " Behold, he comes !"
The rabble throng rush in, and at the bar
Of the immur'd divan present him bound 100

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 147

With cords, his raiment soil'd with hands profane,

His head uncover'd, and his sacred locks

By the rude winds and ruder men despoil'd

Of their propriety, dishevell'd, spread

Like shatter'd fragments on the branching top

Of piny Lebanon after a storm.

Silence now reign'd...the roar of tongues was hush'd,

And expectation, with suspended breath,

**Sate watchful when some sign or word of power
Should in a miracle break forth upon them. 110**

None such that patient Sufferer vouchsaf'd,

Nor menace nor complaint his eye bespake,

But meek, serene composure. Noting this,

As cowards out of danger loudest vaunt, [heard

The council now took heart: Then soon were

The lying tongues of witnesses suborn'd

Various and loud ; but these no order kept ;

Falsehood with falsehood clash'd, and each to each

Irreconcilable, as all to truth :

Shame held the council mute ; for vilest hearts,

Cloak'd in the robes of judgment, will affect

Some outward shew of what they ought to be,

Then most malicious when most seeming just.

Confusion now ensu'd, and perjury

In its own labyrinth had lost itself,

When some of graver note, within the pale
 Of justice seated, but far thence remov'd
 In conscience and in heart, started new charge,
 Averring they had heard the pris'ner say,
 "I will destroy this temple made with hands,
 And within three days will another build
 Made without hands." The charge was grave-
 ly urg'd,

And, colour'd to the semblance of a plot,
 Breath'd sacrilegious menace to God's house,
 Fit matter for descant pontifical :
 When CAIAPHAS, as foremost in degree,
 So, to sound forth danger first, and affix
 Solemnity to malice, from his state
 With magisterial dignity arose,
 And sternly fixing on the face divine 140
 His eye inquisitorial, thus began :

"Hear'st thou what these alledge : the words
 in charge

Stand witness'd by these present : Face to face
 Th' accusers they and thou th' accused meet :
 Justice is open. What is thy defence ? [he,
 Answerest thou nothing?"]—Nothing answer'd
 But as a lamb before its shearer's mute
 He open'd not his mouth ; the mystery couch'd
 Under those words, prophetic of his death
 And following resurrection, to expound 150
 To their perverted minds bescem'd not him,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 149

Searcher of hearts, and Saviour of mankind :
Silent not pertinacious he endur'd
Their scorn ; nor did his meek demeanor shew
More than the dignity of conscious truth,
Which knows itself prejudg'd, and scorns a plea.

But CAIAPHAS, who brook'd not this repulse,
And still occasion sought from his own lips
By subtlety t' ensnare him, thus re-urg'd
Question with solemn adjuration back'd ; 160
“ Hear me, thou man accus'd, and answer make
I do adjure thee by the living God
To what I now demand. Art thou the CHRIST,
The very CHRIST, Son of th' eternal God,
Or art thou not ? Resolve us who thou art ! ”

Then JESUS, by this solemn adjuration urg'd,
Lifting his eyes to heav'n in mute appeal,
Whilst all his Father's virtue in his face
Effulgent beam'd, these glorious words pronounc'd : [earth,
“ Hear them, O heav'n, and Oh ! record them,
Write them, ye mortals, on your hearts—I am,
I am the CHRIST ; all that you ask I am ;
And ye shall see me coming in the clouds
Of Heav'n, enthron'd at the right hand of
Pow'r.”

As when on rapine bent, a savage horde,
Arab or Indian, in some sandy dell
Or by the sedgy lake in ambush lodg'd,

Upon the watch-word by their leader giv'n
Leap from their treach'rous lair, with sudden
yell

And bloody weapons waving to surprise 180

And overpower th' unguarded traveller,

Fatally trapp'd into their murderous snare ;

So at the signal of their priestly chief

Up rose the dire divan with rushing sound,

Like roar of distant waters. Terror-struck,

Frantic as Bromius, with furious hands

Th' enthusiastic hierarch seiz'd his robes,

And into tatters, like a cancell'd scroll,

Tore them, exclaiming vehement and loud,

That all might hear—"What need of further
proof? [sirs?

Ye have heard his blasphemy. How think ye,

What may such crime deserve?" 'Th' infuriate
priests,

Seiz'd by like phrensy, with one voice pronounce,

"Death be his sentence!" Death through all
the hall

Rebounding echoes back th' accurs'd decree.

Horrible sentence! Murder hatch'd in hell;

Libation for the fiends! Dæmons, on you

And on your generations to all time

His righteous blood shall rest. Now uproar wild

And horrid din succeeds. The scoffing crowd

Rush to the bar, so privileged, and there

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With scurril taunts and blasphemies revile
The patient Son of God. Oh ! thought of horror !
The Saviour of mankind revil'd by man,
The just by th' unjust ! Others, more profane,
Vent their vile rheum upon his sacred face,
Orsmite him with their palms, then gibing cry,
"Tell us who smote thee ; prophesy, thou
CHRIST." [doom

Monsters, that CHRIST hath prophecied, your
Already by that prophet is pronounc'd, 210
The lips you strike have utter'd it : Behold !
Jerusalem is fall'n, her towers are dust,
Your city smokes in ruin : Lo ! what piles
Of mangled carcases : what horrid scenes
Of violated matrons : Hark ! what screams
Of infants butcher'd in their mothers' arms ;
And look ! your temple blazes to the sky ;
Its beams of cedar overlaid with gold,
Its fretted roof with carvings rich emboss'd,
And all its glorious splendor feed the flames
Insatiate ; mark how high their serpent spires
Hissing ascend : God fans them in his ire :
Thither the wild beasts of the desert hie...
There carrion owls by midnight haunt...there
dwells
The dragon and the satyrs dance : 'Tis done !
That prophecy is seal'd. There yet remains
An awful consummation unreveal'd,

Till God shall gather up your scatter'd race
Still vagrant o'er th' inhospitable earth.

Ah ! wretched people, broken and dispers'd,
Did ye preserve the oracles of God
But to convict your own obduracy ?

Sad nation, on whose neck the iron yoke
Of persecution hard, too hard, hath lain,
And yet lies heavy, will ye not accept
A High Priest, holy, harmless, undefil'd,
From sinners sep'rate, and exalted high
Above the heavens ? And do ye not perceive
The word of JESUS in yourselves fulfill'd ?

Rue then the prophecy, which you provok'd,
Of faithless fathers ye still faithless sons !
Whilst shuddering I recount the impious taunts
Of that blaspheming rout : But neither taunts
Nor violence could shake the Saviour's peace ;
He in his own pure sp'rit collected stood,
Nor of their base revilings took account. [ny'd

'Twas now that CHRIST, knowing himself de-
Three times of PETER, turn'd and look'd upon
him.

He from the garden, where his Lord was seiz'd,
Following at distance JUDAS and his band, 250
Had kept his eye upon their moving fires,
And up the sacred Mount pursued their track,
Till at the palace-door he stood and sought
Admission with the crowd ; when there, behold !

damsel at the portal scans him o'er
 ith scrutinizing eye, and straight exclaims,
 Thou too wert in this Galilean train ;
 thou art of JESUS."—Sudden to his heart
 he coward tremor runs, and there suggests
 the fear-conceived lie ; before them all 260
 ith confidence to falsehood ill apply'd,
 I know not what thou say'st," he straight avers,
 and to the porch goes forth. There in his ear
 he cock his first shrill warning gives, and sings
 the knell of constancy's predicted breach—
 Of constancy, alas ! too strongly vouch'd
 by him in rash and over-weening zeal,
 boasting like martyrdom with CHRIST himself,
 the sacrifice appointed for mankind.
 But he, though of presumption warn'd, by fear
 ill haunted and the guilty dread of death,
 straight to a second questioner replies—
 I do not know the man"—and to engage
 relief, binds down the falsehood with an oath...
 fatal appeal to Heav'n ! insult to God
 and his all-righteous ears ! Is this the man,
 who with such glowing ardour, self-assur'd—
 Though all shall be offended, I will not"—
 proudly averr'd, and for that pride reprov'd—
 Though I should die with thee," dauntless re-
 join'd, 280
 Yet will I not deny thee" ?—Man, weak man,

Pride was not made for thee. If PETER fell
 Presuming, who shall say, Behold ! I stand
 In my own strength, nor ask support of God ?
 And now, as if devoted to his shame,
 Curious to pry, yet fearful to be seen,
 He mixes with the throng that crowd the hall ;
 And there once more is challeng'd for his
 speech,

As fav'ring of the Galilean phrase ;
 Then with reiterated oaths abjures 290
 His Master the third time ; when hark ! again
 The cock's loud signal echoes back the lie
 In his convicted ear ; the prophet bird
 Strains his recording throat, and up to heav'n
 Trumpets the trebled perjury, and claps
 His wings in triumph o'er presumption's fall.

Oh ! fall'n how low, is this thy promis'd faith,
 Favour'd of CHRIST so highly ? Know'st thou
 not,

Disciple, thine own Lord ? or know'st him only
 In safety...in prosperity...in power, 300
 For thine own selfish ends...a summer guest,
 Prone to desert him in the wint'ry hour
 Of tribulation, poverty, and woe ?
 Is thy frail mem'ry of that slipp'ry stuff,
 That a friend's sorrow washes out all trace
 Of a friend's features ? Look upon his eyes !
 Behold, they turn on thee : Them dost thou
 know ?

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their language canst thou read, and from them
draw

the conscious reminiscence thou disown'st?
ark, is their sweetness lost? Ah! no; they
beam 310

celestial grace, a sanctity of soul
melting soft with pity, such a gleam
of love divine attemp'ring mild reproof,
there is the man, that to obtain that eye
of mercy on his sins would not forego
life's dearest comforts to embrace such hope?
death, death! where would be thy sting, or
where

these awful tremblings, which thy coming stirs
in my too conscious breast, might I aspire
to hope my Judge would greet me with that
look?

Vaunt not yourselves, ye scorers, nor exult
in this recital of a good man's fall,
faithful historian of his own offence:
but rather let it physic your proud spleen
to mark how mean, prevaricating, false
and despicable a vain-glorious man.
PETER's denial, DAVID's heinous sin,
and all the guilty lapses of man's heart,
though summ'd together into one account,
each spot and blemish malice can search out
to tarnish the fair lustre of a name,

Stand but as lessons of humility,
Warnings of frailty to o'er-weening man ;
And if our mournful page hath now set forth
The fall of virtue, let it next record
Its glorious resurrection : We have shewn
Th' offender in his shame ; what now remains
But to display the penitent ? Behold !
Abash'd he stands, bath'd in remorseful tears :
One glance from his beloved Master's eye, 340
Like Nathan's parable, hath rous'd from sleep
His drowsy conscience. Mark, where he retires
To weep in solitude, and purge his heart
By sorrowful repentance of its guilt.
O PETER ! could my verse fit offering make,
That verse should be bestow'd upon thy tears.
Now the assembled elders and their chief,
After short consultation had, resolve
With the next dawn of morning to arraign
Their Prisoner at the prætorian bar 350
Of PILATE, procurator for the State
Imperial of Rome and Cæsar ; he
Held judgment sovereign of life and death
In tributary Jewry...judge corrupt,
And, like Rome's venal emissaries, prone
To every sordid purpose ; train'd in blood
And for tribunal bloody therefore fit.

Meanwhile, forth issuing from the fatal hall,
Scene of his shame, the sad disciple took

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 457

His pensive way across the temple-court 360

Silent and solitary, seeking where

To unbosom his full sorrows and give up

His soul to prayer, and pardon seek of God

**For his revolt. Pale through night's curtain
gleam'd,**

By fits, the lunar intermittent ray ;

That quiv'ring serv'd to light his lonely steps

To the fair gate call'd Beautiful, whose porch

High over arch'd, on writhed columns propp'd

Of spiral brass convolv'd, was for its shade,

Of CHRIST and his disciples, much in quest. 370

Hither he came, and falling on his knees,

Like th' humble publican, smote on his breast,

And this confession self-accusing made :

**“ Here let me fall, and in repentant tears
Weep out my soul upon these pit'less stones,
Made sacred by his steps, whose awful name
Thrice blasphem'd, thrice abjur'd, I dare not
speak,**

Though in my supplication. Can I say,

Spare me, O God of mercy? Can I ask

Pardon of God, unpardon'd of myself? 380

Oh ! wretched recreant creature as I am,

What shall redeem me from this misery,

And reconcile my conscience to itself...

A perjur'd conscience? Never more can peace

Dwell in this bosom ; never can my soul

Ascend out of the dust, or lift a thought
In hope tow'rd's heav'n. With JUDAS let me
 dwell,

Colleague in treason ; with his sin my sin
In th' execration of all time be link'd.

Or shall I venture to look up and say, 390

O God, behold a wretch, who dares not sue

For mercy but for mitigated wrath—

For punishment proportion'd to my bearing,

Protracted, not too sudden, lest it take

My senses from me, and with them all power

Of meditation, penance, and atonement?

Spare me a little to abhor myself ;

And if the arrow which my conscience drives

Into this guilty heart, draws not enough

Of its vile blood to purify what 's left, 400

Let the strong hand of justice force it home

And finish me at once. Was I not warn'd

Of my presumption, and a signal set

To number my denials, when I swore

Never to swerve, but follow him to death ?

Mine, like ISCARIOT'S, was predicted sin :

I spar'd not him—I call'd his wilful guilt,

Obstinate malice ; and can I now urge

Necessity my plea ? All things are known

To CHRIST : the evil motions of my will 410

He saw, not over-rul'd. I might have pray'd

For grace, support, prevention ; I pray'd not,

But heedless of the prophecy, and blind,
 Rush'd into sin prepense, self-will'd, self-lost,
 What fascination seiz'd me to draw forth
 The sword in rash defence of Him, whose word
 Legions of angels could have call'd from heav'n?
 And what prevaricating dæmon breath'd
 The lie into my lips, when the same night,
 Nay, the same hour, that saw me prompt t' op-
 pose 420

My life to danger, saw me meanly shrink
 From what I courted, and behind a lie,
 Three times repeated, like a coward sculk?
 And did I not know CHRIST whom I deny'd?
 Did I not know the Master whom I serv'd,
 Who call'd me to him, pour'd into my heart
 His heav'nly doctrines, rais'd my lowly thoughts
 From the mean drudg'ry of a fisher's trade,
 And taught me, in the energy of faith,
 To walk upon that sea, in which ere-while 430
 I dragg'd the net, and toil'd for daily bread?
 O mem'ry, once my glory, now my curse,
 To what sad purpose do I call thee home,
 Absent in danger, present in despair?
 Is there a wonder done by CHRIST on earth
 I have not witness'd? Did I not behold
 Dead Lazarus revive at his command?
 What shall I say to him, whom I saw die,
 When living he arraigns me face to face?

What answer make to those, whom I have
serv'd [sands?

From one small wallet with the bread of thou-
The very blind, ere they receiv'd their sight,
Saw more than I, and hail'd him Lord and CHRIST.
Who shall believe when I renounce belief?

The very devils own him whom I deny'd.

Can I call these accurst, whose impious cry
Dooms him to death; who smite him with their
palms [heart.

Blaspheming? Harder than their hands my
Wretch, 'twas my false tongue train'd them on
to murder;

On me, me only all their sin rebounds : 450

I stand condemned—they free. Can I forget
How oft my lips confess'd him Son of God?
Perish that tongue, which could revoke its faith,
Disown confession and belie my heart.

Denied of me on earth, when in the clouds
Of heav'n he comes at the right hand of Pow'r,
And sends his Angels with the trumpet's sound
To gather his elect from the four winds,
When, as a shepherd culling out his flock,
To separate all nations, and divide 460

The good from evil, he proceeds, Ah! then,
Then will he not retort the fatal words
First us'd of me, "I know thee not! Depart,
Thou wicked servant, into outer darkness,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 161

**There weep and gnash thy teeth, in fires prepar'd
For SATAN and his out-cast crew accurst ?"**

**Thus he all night, with deep remorse o'er-
whelm'd,**

**Mournfully kneeling at God's temple-gate,
Bewail'd his crime, and supplication made
For pardon ; and let after-times attest 470
How full a portion of God's sp'rit abode
In this blest penitent, when, with the sound
Of rushing mighty winds, it was pour'd down
On him and on his fellows, thence install'd
Apostles, and with gifted tongues inspir'd
To speak all languages and preach the word
Of CHRIST throughout the whole converted
world.**

**Here in this very spot, where now he kneels
Repentant, fill'd ere long with pow'r divine,
He bade the cripple, in the name of CHRIST, 480
Rise up and walk. He at the word, in sight
Of all the people, rose, and stood, and walk'd,
And in the temple gave loud praise to God.
Then let not his offence, pardon'd of God,
By man but for example's sake be nam'd,
And once more, hail, thou renovat'd saint !
Made brighter by repentance. Enter thou
Into thy Master's joy once more ; resume
Thine apostolic primacy, and feed,
Shepherd of CHRIST deputed, feed his flock ; 490**

Nor shall thy faith once falter, nor thy zeal
Shrink from the test of martyrdom, reserv'd
To glorify thy Master on the cross.

Now morning from her cloudy barrier forth
Advancing, crimson'd all the flecker'd East,
As blushing to lead on the guilty day.
With the first dawn the wakeful elders meet...
Short council hold ; for little time suffic'd
To take their voices, whose relentless minds
In the same bloody league were banded all ; 500
And now, unanimous with their high priest,
In stately, grave procession forth they march .
To find their heathen judge, and at his bar
Arraign the Holy One.—But check, my heart,
Thine indignation ; let the verse proceed !—
Him, in his seat of judgment high enthron'd,
With axes and with lictors round embay'd
In martial state, with reverence they salute,
And lowly stoop their tributary heads
To his vicegerent majesty. With smile 510
Of condescending favour he accepts
Their abject greeting, and to his right hand
Their chief advances ; others in their ranks
And orders he disposes ; then with feign'd
Solicitude, as if to seek the cause
Of this concerted meeting, he begins :

“ What cause so weighty brings JEHOVAH'S
priests

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With these wise elders and time-honor'd scribes
Thus early to seek justice at my bar ?
Appealso reverend, with such leader grac'd, 520
And by such followers witness'd, well demands
Of Cæsar's servant his most equal ear."

Whereto th' high-priest, second to none in
craft,
With solemn accent and demcanor grave
Masking his base collusion, thus replies :

" When he, whose hand the sword of justice
sways,

Her balance also holds in equal poise
Over this realm provincial, we have cause
To thank the master of our liberties,
Who, by such delegation of his power, 530
Makes light that yoke, which else would gall our
necks,

Though Cæsar lays it on us. Then let praise
Be giv'n to Cæsar for the love we bear
To PONTIUS PILATE. Have I leave to say,
That we, your servants, a peculiar race,
Pay worship to one God, and hold at heart
As sacred that commandment handed down
From our forefathers, which forever makes
His undivided Unity the creed
Of all our nation ; and whoe'er blasphemes 540
His name and controverts our holy faith,
Dies by our law ? This sentence we have pass'd,

But execution staid, so bound in duty,
Upon a certain Nazarite, by name
JESUS, obscure of birth, but of our peace
No slight disturber ; for the common herd,
A monster as you know with many heads,
And every head with twice as many ears
Itching for novelties, have rais'd this man
To dang'rous eminence ; and (for he cheats 550
Their gross credulity with juggling sleights
Which they call miracles) have blown his pride
To such a monstrous bulk, he now scales heav'n,
There seats himself—Oh ! where shall I find
words

To speak his blasphemy ?—at God's right hand,
His Son...his equal...sharer of his throne...
Judge of the world. If this be not a crime
For death to expiate we are slaves indeed,
And every statute, ordinance, and law
Rome leaves inviolate, JESUS shall break 560
Unpunish'd : Nor is this, dread sir, the whole
Of his presumption ; mark, I pray, the height
To which his phrensy rages ; mark his threat!
He will put down this temple in three days,
And in like time, with hands invisible,
Erect another.—Patron of our laws,
Fountain of justice ! ought this man to live ?
Such madness breath'd into our people's minds
Will spur them to the deed...break every band

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hat ties them down to order, and turn loose
their fury, not on us alone, but Rome ;
not on our temple only, but perhaps
in this tribunal, which heav'n guard ! And now
take the whole matter of our charge at once :
this Jesus hath pronounc'd himself a king...
your king, your master's rival : You best know
your great emp'ror abdicates his right
to our allegiance, which we fain would hold
here we have vow'd it, to imperial Cæsar,
not to this mean mechanic, Joseph's son. 580
this is our plea, O PONTIUS, why we claim
justice against the Pris'ner, who now waits
our sentence under guard and bound, as fits
a delinquent so atrocious : I have said.”
To him the Roman—“ Be it known to all,
the sentence, which you urge against the life
of your now absent pris'ner, cannot pass
the practice of our law, till face to face
with his accusers he shall stand at bar,
and licence have to answer for himself 590
touching the crime in charge ; therefore these
words,
which you have largely spent, are spent in air,
the might the ear of justice be forestall'd
the empleader's charge, and so perchance
shall fall the axe upon the guiltless head.
Much knowledge of your laws I cannot boast,

Nor with these learned scribes hold argument ;
For so much therefore as to them pertains,
I on the part of Cæsar am no judge ;
His tributes, his supremacy and rights, 600
Disputed or oppos'd, I shall uphold
'Gainst all offenders. Let th' accus'd appear !"

This said, behold the blessed Son of God
Dragg'd to a pagan bar ! 'There whilst he stood
A spectacle of pity, patient, meek,
Submitted to his fate, PILATE, who knew
Him innocent and his accusers false,
Envious and cruel, ey'd him o'er and o'er,
And as he ponder'd in his mind how base
The sentence he was now requir'd to give, 610
Some sparks of Roman virtue, not quite dead,
Though faintly felt in his degen'rate breast,
Revolted from the deed : Soft was the touch,
'Though ineffectual, which sweet pity gave
'To his stern heart : He wish'd, yet knew not
how,

T' unfold the gates of mercy, and through them
Let pass the rescued Innocent to life ;
'The son of Epicurus could no more.
Upon the sufferer's brow serene he saw
Where innocence and sanctity enthron'd 620
Sate visible, and claim'd his just award :
He turn'd him to th' accusers and beheld
Such malice, as brought up to view a groupe

Of his own furies from their fabled hell ;
 Then with a frown he cries, " What law is your's,
 Which makes this man a culprit ere he's tried ?
 Unmanacle his limbs ! A Roman judge
 Hears no man plead in shackles ; he who speaks
 In life's defence, hath call for every aid
 That nature can bestow, free use of limbs, 630
 Action and utterance to grace his cause,
 And hold him up against the world's contempt ;
 I will not hear a man that pleads in bonds.
 Cut those vile cords asunder : Set him loose !"

And now our blessed Lord, his arms releas'd
 From the harsh thongs, which the malignant
 Jews

Had bound about them, 'gan to recompose
 His decent vesture, and with calm survey
 To note his persecutors, those dire priests
 And cruel hypocrites that bay'd him round. 640
 In every breast, transparent to his eye,
 Malice, and craft, and envy he discern'd :
 In PILATE's face the shifting hues bespoke
 Internal strife of passions all in arms—
 Combat 'twixt good and evil : In his hand
 He held a scroll, which with intente eye
 And thoughtful brow deep pond'ring he perus'd :
 The writing well he knew, but the contents,
 Thus worded, much perplex'd his wav'ring
 thoughts ;

“ O PILATE, if thy wife was ever held 650
In honor, love, or trust, I do adjure thee
This once take warning from her voice inspir'd
To snatch thee from destruction. Oh ! withhold
Thine hand from that just person, harm not him,
That holy JESUS, who now stands before thee ;
Touch not his sacred life, or on thine head
A fearful judgment thou shalt else pull down :
A mighty Pow'r protects him, what I know not,
But mightier sure than all the gods of Rome ;
For I have seen his glory in a dream, [ware !”
And dreams descend from heav'n. Pilate, be-

Such was the warning scroll he now perus'd,
Ev'n on the judgment seat, by timely hand
Sent for his rescue : Happy ! had he turn'd
His heart so warn'd to justice, and obey'd
The visitation of the spirit vouchsaf'd :
But he, like Cæsar, deem'd his manhood pledg'd
To make slight 'count of a weak woman's dream :
Yet much confus'd, uncertain and perplex'd,
He look'd around and saw all eyes upon him ;
The Jews impatient, JESUS at the bar
Prepar'd for trial : What shall he resolve ?
Break up the court and judgment put aside
For a mere vapor—for no better plea
Than to indulge a woman's fond caprice,
And bid the law stand still and wait the time
“ Till PILATE's wife shall meet with better
dreams ?”

Such scorn he dar'd not to provoke ; and now
 Loud murmurs fill'd his ear : Compell'd to rise,
 Though uncollected, and in mind disturb'd 30
 He thus address'd the Lord : " Art thou a king,
 And of this nation, who accuse thee,
 King of the Jews ?"—" Thou say'st," JESUS
 cry'd :

" But say'st thou of thyself this thing, or, taught
 Of others, art thou prompted so to speak ?—
 Am I a Jew ?" the fault'ring judge reply'd ;
 " Not I, but these, who if thou wert a king
 Were thine own subjects, elders, priests and
 scribes,

These have accus'd thee. Not of them am I ;
 Nor in this business covet further share, 690
 Than, on the part of justice, to demand,
 What hast thou done ? How answer'st thou
 their charge ?" [Lord,

" Of this world were my kingdom," said our
 " My servants would defend their King, and
 fight

To save me from my oppressors : But I reign
 Not on this earth, nor is my pow'r from hence."

" Art thou a king, then ?"—interpos'd the
 judge :

" Thou say'st," cry'd JESUS, " that I am a king ;
 And truly to this purpose was I born,
 And for this cause came I into the world, 700

That I should witness bear unto the Truth ;
And all, that to the Truth belong, hear me."

"What is the Truth?" said PILATE ; but his
voice

Now falter'd, and his thoughts unsettled, wild
And driv'n at random like a wreck, could grasp
No helm of reason ; only this he knew,
There was no fault before him : This aloud
To all he publish'd, and pronounc'd him clear.

Whereat, with rage and disappointment stung,
Furious as wolves defrauded of their prey, 710
Uprose the priests appellant, and afresh
Urge o'er and o'er their aggravating charge,
Forging new falsehoods and re-forging old :
The Preacher of forbearance, peace and love,
Perverter of the nation now they call,
Fomenter of sedition, spreading wide
From Galilee, the cradle of his birth,
Throughout all Jewry to the capital ;
Where now assuming to himself the name,
Prerogative, and state of King and CHRIST, 720
He stirreth up the people to revolt,
Forbidding them to pay their rightful dues
Of tribute to Rome's emperor, himself
Exalting above Cæsar. This, and more
In the like strain of virulence, with lips
In aspic venom steep'd, they now depose ;
Nor had they brought their malice to a pause,

When PILATE, hoping he had now found plea
To shift the dreaded sentence from himself,
Thus interposing, check'd their clam'rous
spleen : 730

“ Break off, and let your tongues take rest a-
while :

It is not at this bar you must implead
This man, a Galilean as it seems ;
Whom, being such, it is not mine to hear,
But HEROD'S : Let his special tetrarch judge
'Twixt him and you : Thither remit your suit.”

This said, he rose, preventing all reply,
Whilst they, though by procrastination gall'd,
Yet of their tetrarch confident, submit :
But nor with HEROD could their malice speed
To its main purpose : Little care had he
For all their priestly clamour ; in his thoughts
Religion had no interest...truth no weight :
For prophets and for prophecies no ear
Had he, alike regardless how CHRIST preach'd,
Or they complain'd ; yet much he wish'd to see
Some splendid miracle of him perform'd—
Something to strike his senses with surprise
And satisfy a wanton curiosity,
Made eager by the fame of those great works,
Whereof he much had heard, and nothing seen.
But when our LORD to all his questions mute
Nor word nor sign vouchsaf'd, to wrath impell'd,

What by enticements he had fail'd to gain
By taunts he hop'd to extort ; and now his
spleen

To impious scorn and mockery gave the reign :

Forthwith his pris'ner in a gorgeous robe

Apparell'd as a king, to all his court

Held up for sport and laughter, he expos'd.

Loud was the roar of blasphemy the whilst, 760

And wild the revels of the scoffing throng

As the lewd orgies of the frantic god,

Or clamour of that sacrilegious rout,

When their mad rage the Thracian minstrel tore,

Whose wonder-working harp could charm the ear

Of hell, and call dead nature into life.

The priests look'd on and grinn'd malicious joy ;

Yet would not HEROD execution doom ;

Or willing to appease the jealousy

Of PILATE, or content to mark his scorn 770

Of JESUS by this arrogant display

Of mercy, as not dreading whom he spar'd.

Now once again at PILATE's bar he stands,

Not as before like malefactor ty'd

And round begirt with cords, but overlaid

With a rich load of sumptuous mockery ;

A lamb compell'd to carry the proud spoils

And guilty trappings of the tyrannous wolf.

Again the judge with slow unwilling step

To his tribunal mounts, and thus he speaks :

"You still persist to bring this man to me
 As a perverter of your nation's faith
 And loyalty: Your witnesses I've heard,
 Ponder'd their depositions, and throughout
 Examin'd ev'ry tittle of your charge:
 Him too I've question'd in the ears of all
 Here present, and no shadow of offence
 Can I discern to warrant your appeal
 For execution, and pass judgment on him:
 No, nor yet HEROD, for to him I sent 790
 You and your Pris'ner, and behold him freed;
 Nothing is done unto him worthy death:
 I will chastise him therefore and release;
 Yet this chastisement, rather to allay
 Your anger, than so merited of him,
 I shall inflict. Remember this your feast
 Hath the long plea of custom to be mark'd
 With pardon and forbearance: To reprieve
 One culprit from his sentence I am bound
 No less by inclination than by rule 800
 And usage immemorial: Make your choice!
 But let it fall on innocence, not guilt."

Instant all voices echo'd forth a cry—
 "Hence with this man! away with him to death!
 Give us the murd'rer....set Barabbas free:
 Let JESUS perish!"—"Wherefore; for what
 crime?"

PILATE exclaim'd: "What evil hath he done?"

No cause of death in JESUS can I find,
Be witness for me, justice, none in him ;
But for that wretch, on whom ye would bestow
Pardon misplac'd, so various are his crimes,
So black their quality, ye cannot name
A death more terrible than he deserves.
Take of the guiltless blood what stripes can draw
To satisfy your longing, but forbear
To take the life, if not for pity's sake,
In honor of yourselves, that ye may say,
There was one prophet, whom ye did not kill."

Loud as the winds that lash the raging seas,
And all as deaf, redoubling now the roar, 820
Th' infuriate Jews rend their blaspheming throats
Howling for blood ; 'till deafen'd with the din
Of *Crucify him ! crucify him !* (dreadful cry,)
PILATE, who 'twixt their tumult and the death
Of that just person saw no middle course,
By which t' escape, one solemn act prepar'd,
By expiatory washing of his hands
In presence of the multitude, to purge
His soul, and therefore God alone is judge,
From the pure blood of that devoted Lamb. 830

"Behold!" he cries, "I pour this water forth,
And therein make ablution of my soul
From all participation in your crime,
By washing of my hands from every stain
Of this inhuman sacrifice, each spot

And sprinkling of this guiltless Victim's blood.
Rest on your heads the murder ! I am clean."

"This said, he turn'd and fix'd a pitying look
Upon the LORD ; then sigh'd and gave the word ;
Eager as hounds, when slipp'd upon their prey,
In rush the throng, and soon the hissing scourge
Whirl'd with impetuous swing aloud resounds
Gashing that sacred flesh, whose bleeding stripes
Heal'd our sin-wounded souls ; upon his brow
A thorny crown they fix, whose tort'ring spikes,
Thrust rudely in by sacrilegious hands,
Furrow his temples, and with crimson streams
Cover his face divine : Him thus abus'd,
Mangled with stripes and all o'erbath'd in blood,
In purple robe they scornfully array 850
And drag to public view.—"Behold the man !"
Pilate proclaim'd, with horror in his voice
And out-stretch'd arm, that pointed to a sight
Which had to pity mov'd their steely hearts,
Had they not been of metal forg'd by fiends
And temper'd in the sternest fires of hell.
Dry-eyed, as rock of adamant unmov'd,
Obdurate to his sorrows they look'd on,
Nor from their crucifying clamour ceas'd,
Till Pilate, now all hope for JESUS lost, 860
Yielding to their tumultuous fury, cry'd :

" Take him, and do your bloody work your-
selves :

Impose it not on me ; I find no cause
Of death, no fault in JESUS. Take ye him
And crucify him ! Of his guiltless blood,
Lo ! I am innocent ; see ye to that !”

“ On us and on our children be his blood !”
Then answer’d all the Jews. Tremendous words,
Tremendously fulfill’d ! And now afresh
They clamour for the cross ; when thus the
judge—

“ Would you that I should crucify your King ?”
“ We have no king but Cæsar,” they rejoin,
“ Nor art thou Cæsar’s friend to spare this man.”
’Twas past ; to that dread name the Roman
bow’d

Obedient, and from his sad heart sigh’d forth
Th’ extorted doom—death to the Lord of Life !

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VI.

Z

ARGUMENT OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

Judas Iscariot, seized with remorse, returns the thirty pieces of silver to the priests, and departs. Mammon re-assumes the habit of a Levite, and meeting Judas, after he had returned the money to the priests, instigates him to destroy himself. That evil spirit now takes wing and repairs to the wilderness...convenes the dæmons from all parts of Palestine, and, informing them of Satan's expulsion from earth, warns them by his command to betake themselves to flight, before the hour of Christ's crucifixion. This is no sooner announced, than the whole infernal host breaks up in disorder, and disperses to various parts of the world therein described. The subject of the crucifixion is now brought forward : The procession sets out for Mount Calvary : Christ, bearing his cross, is bewailed by the spectators as he passes : He is seen by Gabriel and the angels with him from the mount, on which they were stationed : He addresses himself to the daughters of Jerusalem : The executioners nail his hands and feet to the cross ; the priests revile him, and call upon him to come down ; one of the malefactors crucified with him, casts the same in his teeth ; he is reproved by the other, whose penitence is rewarded by the promise of immediate salvation and glory. Christ from the cross recommends his mother to John, the beloved disciple. Christ dies. The sun is darkened...the earth quakes...the rocks are rent, and the bodies of the saints and prophets are raised from the dead and appear upon earth. The priests and elders, alarmed by these prodigies, resort to Pilate and demand a guard of Romans to defend the sepulchre, lest the disciples should take away the body of Christ, and pretend that he was risen : Pilate replies, that they have a watch ; bids them see to it themselves, and dismisses them.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK VI.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

“ON us and on our children be his blood !”—
Such was your imprecation, O ye Jews,
When in your sight the world's Redeemer stood
Gash'd o'er with wounds, and emptying ev'ry
vein

For man's redemption ; and behold ! it flows...
It whelms upon you in a flood-gate tide ;
Steep'd to the lips ye are in all the blood
Of all the righteous shed upon the earth,
From blood of righteous Abel to the blood
Of Zechariah, whom your fathers ston'd 10
Betwixt the altar and the house of God.
Ye have enough ; the mark is on your race ;
Ye have drawn down the judgment ye provok'd ;
It rests upon you : Yet for you no rest,
No station, no abiding-place is found ;
Strangers and weary wand'ers upon earth,
If in the dust of your Jerusalem
With foot proscrib'd ye dare to tread, ye die ;
A savage race usurps your sacred mount,

And Jordan echoes an unhallow'd name ; 20
 Should ye but stop to shed a filial tear
 Upon the soil where your forefathers sleep,
 Woe to the circumcis'd that so is found !
 Oh ! slow of heart, when will ye understand,
 That thus afflicted, scatter'd and dispers'd
 Through every clime and kingdom of the world,
 Ye are sent forth to publish, as ye pass,
 How truly CHRIST predicted of your fate ;
 And though your lips deny, your sufferings prove
 That prophet JESUS, whom your fathers slew, 30
 Was Saviour, Christ, Messias, Son of God.

Amidst the throng that fill the judgment hall
 Stood JUDAS ; he upon the watch t' avoid
 The Master's eye, with caution took his post ;
 Yet was his ear to all that JESUS spake [strong
 Still present, and, though few the words, yet
 And potent of those few th' impressive truth.
 There was a magic sweetness in his voice,
 A note that seem'd to shiver every nerve
 Entwin'd about his heart, though now corrupt,
 Debas'd, and harden'd. Ill could he abide,
 Murderer although he were, the dying tones
 Of Him, whom he had murder'd : 'Twas the
 voice

As of a spirit in the air by night
 Heard in the meditation of some crime,
 Or sleep-created in the troubled ear

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 181

f conscience, crying out, Beware ! It smote
pon the soul, for it was CHRIST who spake ;
ell then might JUDAS tremble : 'Twas the
traitor

ist'ning the plea of innocence betray'd ; 50
ell might that plea awaken his remorse.

hen the perverting witnesses depos'd
o crimes of which he knew his Master free,
he refutation quiver'd on his lips,
nd hard he struggled to bring forth the words,
et could not, tongue-ty'd with despair and
shame.

ut if his hearing so alarm'd his heart,
hat were his feelings, when at times his eye
lanc'd on the sacred person of his Lord,
ound like a felon, his defenceless hands 60
manacles, confin'd behind his back,
is cheeks with blows sufflated, and his face
Oh, piteous !) with blaspheming slaver stain'd ;
hen stripp'd, transform'd, in purple stole ar-
ray'd,

luted with the insolent "All-hail,
ing of the Jews !" — a spectacle of sport
nd merriment to all the scoffing crowd ?
ould heart of man bear this, who had beheld
is miracles...his mercies ; prov'd his love...
is patience...his forbearance ; shar'd his cares,
is labours and his watchings ; heard his voice,

When tempest-tost, rebuke the elements,
Though silent now amidst the roar of tongues?
'Twas all that priestly malice could inflict,
But more than MAMMON'S convert could support.
Yet worse had these tormentors in reserve
To agonize his soul...another scene
To shift new horrors on that bloody stage :
The torturing scourge now sounded in his ears.
The mangled flesh flew off in tatter'd stripes....
The crimson stream ran down...the pavement
drank

Libation of his immolated blood :
The hall rebellow'd with the echoing cry
Of monsters who applauded every stroke ;
Wolves, vultures ; Oh, for words to speak them
worse !

Men turn'd to dæmons. Traitor tho' he were,
Son of perdition, this was all too much.

“Take hence,” he cry'd, “take back your
bribe accurst, [coin ;
Damn'd price of damning deed ! Tell o'er your
Count out your thirty pieces ; for each piece 90
Is thirty thousand daggers to my heart :
Burthen'd too much already with my sins,
I should but into worse damnation sink,
Under this mercenary load opprest.
I have betray'd the innocent ; too late
For pardon, I am past redemption lost ;

Ye may redeem the time, if ye recal
Your fatal condemnation, and atone
To that just Person ye have doom'd to death ;
If not, ye crucify the Lord of Life." 100

This said, he threw the thirty pieces down
And strait departed ; they to his retort
Short answer made, remorseless and malign.
And now disburthen'd of his filthy bribe,
It seem'd as though his conscience would permit
A momentary pause, for one short gleam
Of hope to visit his benighted soul :
'Twas something like atonement ; 'twas one step
Turn'd backward from the precipice of sin,
And pointed tow'rs repentance ; 'twas the last
Faint effort that reluctant nature made
To struggle 'gainst self murder : but how vain !
For MAMMON, once the tyrant of man's heart,
Ill brooks expulsion thence ; from youth to age,
From age to life's extremest hour he holds
Absolute empire ; nor does hell contain
Spirit so jealous of usurp'd command.
He in the bosom of those impious priests
Held high pre-eminence, and them amidst,
Himself unseen, had noted all that pass'd ; 120
And much indignant to be now abjur'd
Of that compunctious traitor, swift as thought,
(Such was his power of motion,) took the form
And habit of that Levite, first assum'd,

And him close following to the outward hall,
There with these taunting words assail'd his ear:

“ A losing game, friend JUDAS, thou hast play'd,
To set thy soul upon a desperate cast,
And after pay the stake on either side.
What folly is it to be knave by halves ! 180

Who would strike virtue in the face, and then
Ask pardon for the blow—fall off from truth,
Enlist with falsehood and take pay for treason,
Then by a paltry plea of restitution,
Think to compound one tresspass by another...
Desertion by desertion? Get thee hence, [dregs
Thou shame to manhood ! wring out the sad
Of thy detested life in hopeless tears,
For thou hast thrown away both worlds at once ;
All gain in this...all glory in the next.” 140

“ And what art thou,” cried JUDAS, “ so to gall
A wounded spirit, wounded by thy arts,
Tempter accurst ? Human thou canst not be,
Else thou would'st find some pity in thy heart
For wretch like me. Who but thyself seduc'd
My loyalty from CHRIST ? Who sapp'd my faith ?
Who fix'd this adder to my breast, but thou ?
Thou, dæmon as thou art, hast hurl'd me down
From my high hope to fathomless abyss
Of misery and despair...from heav'n to hell.”

“ Rail not on me,” quoth MAMMON, “ but thyself
And thine own folly ; there the charge were just,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 185

**Didst thou not sell thy Master for a bribe ?
My part was faithfully perform'd ; the price
Condition'd for was paid. What would'st thou
more ?**

**I needed treason, and I sought out thee
As fittest for my purpose. Envious, proud,
Lustful of pelf, a villain ready made
And ripe for mischief, such I mark'd thee down ;
Nay, and yet better ; for I thought thee whole
And perfect villain with no rotten part
Of penitence to mar thee ; but, behold,
Thou hast deceived me vilely, and hast got
A blinking vice about thee, a perverse
And retrograde depravity of soul,
That makes thee hateful to my sight. Begone !
That thou art wicked put not me to blame ;
Hadst thou been constant I had made thee rich,
And riches would have sav'd thee from con-
tempt ; [vaunt !
Now thou art poor and loathsome. Hence ; a-
One remedy I'll give thee for despair...
This cord, a remnant of thy Master's bonds—
A legacy most opportunely left
To heal thy cares and recompense thy love :
Take, and apply it to its proper use ;
It ty'd his limbs : Let it encase thy throat.”
He said, and, stooping, from the pavement
took**

The cord there left, and hurling it with scorn
To the desponding traitor, disappear'd.
Nor did that wretch the fatal gift reject, 180
But eager seiz'd the instrument of death,
And soon within a darksome vault, beneath
The judgment-hall, fit solitude he found,
And beam appropriate to his desperate use ;
Whereto appendant he breath'd out his soul,
Not daring to put up one prayer for peace
At his dark journey's end ; but trembling, wild,
Confus'd, of reason as of hope bereft,
With heaving breast and ghastly staring eyes,
There betwixt heav'n and earth, of both re-
nounc'd, 190
Hung, terrible to sight, a bloated corpse. [sume
Oh ! how shall rash and ignorant man pre-
To judge for God, and on his narrow scale
Think to mete out, by limits and degrees,
Immeasurable mercy ? Who can tell
How high the sorrows of man's suffering heart
Ascend tow'ards heaven...how swift contrition
flies...
What words find passage to the throne of grace,
What in mid-way are lost, dispers'd in air,
And scatter'd to the winds ! Oh ! that my harp
Could sound that happy note, which stirs the
string
Responsive, that kind Nature hath entwin'd

About the human heart, and by whose clue
Repentance, heav'nly monitress, reclaims
The youthful wand'rer from his dang'rous maze
To tread her peaceful paths, and seek his God :
So could my fervent, my effectual verse
Avail, posterity should then engrave
That verse upon my tomb, to tell the world
I did not live in vain. But heedless man, 210
Deaf to the music of the moral song,
By Mammon or by Belial led from sin
To sin, runs onward in his mad career ;
Nor once takes warning of his better guide,
Till, at the barrier of life's little span
Arriv'd, he stops : Death opens to his view
A hideous gulph ; in vain he looks around
For the lost seraph, Hope ; beside him stands
The tyrant fiend and urges to the brink ;
Behind him black despair with threat'ning frown
And gorgon shield, whose interposed orb
Bars all retreat, and with its shade involves
Life's brighter prospects in one hideous night.
So JUDAS fell ; so like him every wretch,
By the same filthy Mammon lur'd, shall fall.

Meanwhile the vengeful dæmon unappeas'd,
Pond'ring the warning of his Stygian lord
Late driv'n from earth, and mindful that the
charge
And conduct of hell's host on him devolv'd

Now claim'd his wariest thoughts, upon the wing
Sets forth full sail to summon his compeers,
As many as in that quarter might be found,
And them apprize of their foul loss incurr'd
By their great captain's fall, and what dispatch
Behoves them now put forth timely to 'scape
Impending danger of their chief foreseen,
If CHRIST'S death-hour should unawares surprize
Them idly station'd, or with curious gaze
Hovering about his cross. So forth he goes :
But first to spy the land he wheels his flight
Athwart Mount Calvary, and there on guard
A file of heav'nly warriors he descries
Covering the sacred hill, and at their head
GABRIEL in golden panoply array'd,
Arm'd at all points, commander of the band.
The fate of SATAN and the recent sight
Of CHEMOS' ghastly wound, with guilty fears
Haunting his coward fancy, warn'd him fly
Beyond the range of that strong spear, from
which
Spirit more warlike than himself had fled. 250
As when a pirate galley on the scout,
Roving the seas of some strong-guarded coast,
In bay or inlet moor'd under the lee
Of headland promontory at anchor spies
A warlike fleet, whose tow'ring masts and sails
Unbent for sea, bespeak their ready trim,

**Down goes the helm at once, the felon crew
Bestir all hands and veer the vessel round
To seaward, then ply oars and sails for life :
So at the sight of that angelic band, 266
The Stygian scout wheel'd round and sped his
flight**

**Sheer to the wilderness on swiftest wing.
There on the watch AZAZEL haply found,
He bade sound forth the loud Satanic trump,
Heard through all Palestine, at call whereof
Sp'rits, to whatever element affix'd,
In troops swift-posting on the charmed winds,
Came from all parts ; from Sidon and from Tyre
New ris'n amidst the waves ; from Gaza's coast,
Meridian limit, to the snow-capt mounts 270
Hermon and Libanus, and them beyond
From Epidaphne on Orontes' stream,
Fam'd for its grove prophetic ; from the banks
Of Pharphar and Abana, Rimmon's haunts ;
From Byblus, where Astarte's wanton train
Howl for the death of Thammuz, yearly lost
And found as oft by the love-frantic dames.
These on the desert heath alighting stand
Obedient to the signal ; all around
Expectant of their arch-angelic chief 280
They cast an anxious look, but look in vain :
Him in far other region they shall find
In chains fast bound amidst eternal fires,**

His dismal dwelling, for them also reserv'd
In God's appointed time. To whom the fiend:

"I muse not, warriors, that ye stand amaz'd
To see yourselves in absence of our chief
Here summon'd by this arch-angelic trump,
Which other breath than his before ne'er fill'd;
But public danger urges this bold step, 290
In me presumptuous, had I not to plead
Your safety for my warrant, and withal
His last sad mandate earnestly bequeath'd
At parting, when, sole witness, I beheld
His utter loss, discomfiture and flight.

Ah, friends! how sympathetic with my soul
Is that deep general groan, which now I hear!
Full cause, immortal mourners, have we all
To groan and beat our breasts; nor I the least,
Whose melancholy task it is to pour 300
These heavy tidings in your grieved ears.

But let us yet remember what we are,
And be not therefore heartless, though bereft
Of him, who was the head and brain of all.
Many and mighty are the chiefs yet left,
Though he, prime chief, no longer shall review
This widow'd host. Of SATAN the return
Is desp'rate, such a whirlwind caught him up,
So strong a southern blast at CHRIST's command
Blew him beyond the stretch of angel ken 310
Right onward to the realm of ancient Night

Impetuous through the empyrean void
 Sheer on the level wing. Of him the fate
 Is worse than doubtful ; of his Victor's power
 And Godhead irresistible what proof
 Greater than this sad downfall can we need,
 Or after such example what provoke ?
 Behoves us now prepare for instant flight ;
 This our late chief, prophetic in his fall,
 With his last words enjoin'd me to propound 320
 To these our legions scatter'd o'er the coasts
 Of Palestine, whom else the coming hour
 Of CHRIST's mysterious passion shall involve
 In like disgrace and ruin with your prince,
 Who to his latest moment upon earth
 Was studious of your safety. I have now,
 In words unworthy of my charge, yet such
 As heart o'erwhelm'd with sorrow can supply,
 Surrender'd to your ears my painful trust.
 But whither to repair, whom to elect 330
 As captain and conductor of this host, [mand
 Now heedless, conscious that such high com-
 With none but with the worthiest should be
 lodg'd,
 I, as becomes me, to your wiser thoughts
 Submit, and with the general choice shall close."
 No more ; for now, with sudden panic seiz'd,
 The Stygian host, no voice imperial heard
 Nor rule nor order kept, uprose at once,

Disbanded, lawless ; dreadful was the yell
Of that infernal rout—a swarm as thick 340
As locusts, making horrid night beneath
Their wings, that with like clangor beat the air,
As of a flock of cormorants disturb'd
From some lone island on the rocky coast
Of Chili, where they haunt ; so they with cry
More hideous mount, there hover for a while,
Then to all points disperse, as chance falls out,
Or short consult prescribes. Some to the south,
With Isis and Osiris at their head,
To Memphis, Thin and Tamis take their flight,
There with the bestial deities to herd,
Birds, serpents, reptiles, monsters of the Nile,
Gods that would half unfurnish Noah's ark :
Some with Melcartus, demi-god of Tyre,
Light short, and in its temple refuge take,
Where, arm'd with massy club and lion hide,
His huge athletic idol frowning stands :
Others with Rimmon eastward wing their way
To fam'd Damascus ; there in bow'ring shades
By rilling fountains on the flow'ry turf 360
To doze away the soft oblivious hours,
A slumb'ring synod : Some the golden spires
Of Nineveh attract and Nisroc's fane,
Stain'd with Sennacherib's imperial blood,
There by the parricidal princes shed.
To Byblus and Belitus others speed,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 193

Light feathery wantons, by Astarte led,
With loose-love ditties and soft smiles lur'd on
To page her pride and deck her am'rous sports ;
But of the rest far greater part repair 370
To high Olympus, where presides the power
Of thund'ring Baal ; he that station keeps
Pre-eminent, o'er all the idol gods,
And in his festive hall rich nectar quaffs
With purple lips, and midnight revels holds,
Luxurious, sensual, lewd, in vice immers'd :
Yet some there were, and of no vulgar note,
Who, (grief to tell !) to the biforked mount
Flew off, and there with the Parnassian maids
Held shameful dalliance ; from whose lewd em-
brace 380

Descended a whole family of bards
Corruptive, illegitimate, and base ;
A spurious breed of wickedness and wit ;
A Muse's genius with a dæmon's heart :
MAMMON, meanwhile, a solitary sprite,
Selfish, morose, and e'en by dev'ls abhorr'd,
Hied him alone, on sordid thoughts intent,
To rummage in Pactolus' sands for gold ;
None join'd, nor sought he partner in his flight,
His sole ambition to engross and hoard. 390

Now came the awful consummation on,
The hour of promise, dimly shadow'd out
By types and prophecies, when from the womb

Of mystery, long travailing in pains [forth
And groanings, now in ripe time should spring
Her full form'd revelation, to dispel
The Obscure of ancient days, and usher in
Twin birth of Immortality and Life.
Now God, by th' off'ring of his only Son,
The type of Abraham's sacrifice fulfil'd, 400
Who, though unconscious of that type, by faith
Righteous, was of the promises made heir.
And now, as Moses in the wilderness
Lifted the serpent, so the son of Man
Exalted on the cross shall heal the world
Of sin, and expiate the wide-wasting plague.
Now the peace-offering of the spotless Lamb,
By one conclusive Passover, shall rend
The law's symbolic veil, and all absolve,
Whose consciences are sprinkled with his blood,
From punishment entail'd upon the world
By man's first disobedience. Forth he comes
From condemnation : Ye, too, from your tombs
Come forth, ye prophets !—Son of Amoz, thou
Prepare for resurrection : Come and see,
Not darkly as in a glass, but face to face,
The object of thy vision—Him, the man
Of sorrows—Him, who like a lamb is brought
To slaughter : Mark the travail of his soul ;
Witness how he is stricken for our sins, 410
Witness how we are healed by his stripes,

And by the note and comment of his death
 Construe thine own predictions. Forth he
 comes,

From condemnation, under Roman guard,
 Bearing his cross : Upon his bleeding brow,
 Ensign alike of royalty and woe,
 A thorny crown ; no friendly hand is found
 To wipe away the tear, mingled with blood,
 That hangs upon his cheek : The soldiers cry,
 " Room for the criminal !" and rest their pikes
 To keep the crowd aloof ; staggering beneath
 The ponderous burthen of his cross he faints,
 And sinks to earth o'erspent, till one is found,
 A sturdy stranger of Cyrenian birth,
 On whom to lay the venerable load.
 Hail, SIMON ! blessed above men wert thou,
 If faith in Him who suffer'd on that cross
 Glow'd in thy heart and furnish'd thee with zeal
 To render this last service to thy Lord.

Without the city walls there was a Mount 440
 Call'd CALVARY : The common grave it was
 Of malefactors ; there to plant his cross
 It was decreed : Long was the way to death,
 And, like the ascent to glory, hard to climb.
 Upon the summit stood the angel troop,
 Of MAMMON seen, though to man's filmed eye
 Invisible. Here GABRIEL, from the height
 Noting the sad proccession, had espy'd

The suffering Son of God amidst the throng,
 Dragg'd slowly on by rude and ruffian hands :
 To shameful execution : Horror-struck,
 Pierc'd to the heart, th' indignant seraph shook
 His threat'ning spear, and with the other hand
 Smote on his thigh, in agony of soul
 For man's ingratitude ; glist'ning with tears
 His eyes, whence late celestial sweetness
 beam'd;

Now shot a fiery glance on them below,
 Then raising them to heav'n, he thus exclaim'd :

“ Oh ! that the Everlasting would permit
 His angels to chastise these impious men, 460
 And from their hands his holy Son redeem,
 Whom in the heav'n of heav'ns we have beheld
 Beloved of the Father, ever blest,
 At the right hand of pow'r in glory thron'd !
 But this for purposes beyond our reach
 God, ever wise, forbids ; and who against
 God's interdict shall stir ? Therefore retire,
 Stand off and wait the time ! If CHRIST come
 We are his ministers to do his will, [mands,
 Be it to lift this mountain from its base 470
 And whelm it on his murderers ; if not,
 Patient spectators we must here abide,
 And let the sacrilegious work proceed ;
 Knowing that God hath said, I will revenge :
 Vengeance belongeth to the Lord alone.”

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 197

Now on the news of their great Prophet's fate
Each heart with fearfulness and trembling seiz'd,
Through all Jerusalem the tumult ran ;
Native or stranger, aged or infirm,
None in the Holy City now kept house : 480
Where'er the Saviour pass'd, his presence drew
Thousands to gaze ; and many an aching heart
Heav'd silent the last tributary sigh
In memory of his mercies ; zealous some
Rush'd in the grateful blessing to bestow
For health, or limbs, or life itself restor'd :
But these the soldiers rudely thrust aside,
And some with brutal violence they smote,
Thick'ning their files to hem their pris'ner close,
As fearful of a rescue. Loud the cry 490
Of women, whose soft sex to pity prone,
Melts at those scenes, which flinty-hearted man
Dry-ey'd contemplates : Mothers in their arms
Held up their infants, and with shrill acclaim
Begg'd a last blessing for those innocents,
Whose sweet simplicity so well he lov'd,
And ever as he met them laid his hands
Upon their harmless heads, with gentle love
And gracious benediction, breathing heav'n
Into their hearts. Oh ! happy babes, so blest !
Fenc'd in with shields and spears, and com-
pass'd round
With Roman guards, the persecuting priests,

Elders and scribes follow'd their victim's steps
Amidst the scoffs and hissings of the crowd ;
And still as CHRIST approach'd the fatal spot,
Loud and more loud the sad lamentings grew,
Till at the foot of the funeral mount

Arriv'd he stopt, and turning to the group
Of mourners, these prophetic words address'd :

“ Daughters of Solyma, weep not for me, 510
Weep rather for yourselves and for your babes ;
For lo ! the dawn of sorrows is at hand ;
'The dread prediction presses to the birth,
When through Jerusalem a voice shall cry,
Give thanks, ye childless matrons, and confess
A barren bed, your worst misfortune deem'd,
Now your best best blessing : Break forth into
joy,

Ye, at whose breasts no infant ever hung,
For ye have none to mourn. Now to the clefts
And caverns of the mountains they shall say 520

“ Fall on us, cover us, ye rocky vaults,
And hide us from this wrath ! For if with us
Already it begins, what shall the end
Of the ungodly and the sinner be !

If the green tree cannot abide the storm,
How shall the dry escape ?”—And now no more.
Upon the summit of Mount CALVARY
They rear his cross ; conspicuous there it stands
An ensign of salvation to the world.

199

life,

flows

The soldiers, now by their centurion form'd
In hollow orb around the cross, begin
Their horrid prelude to the murd'rous scene ;
And first his vesture, their accustom'd spoil
And perquisite, they part ; but for his coat
From top to bottom woven without seam, 540
That they rend not, but on it cast their lots
Whose it shall be entire. Upon his cross
In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, they inscribe,
(So PILATE will'd, though by the priests oppos'd)
"JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS !"
This title in three several tongues display'd,
Read all those crucifyers of their King,
And murmur'd as they read ; hard to the last,
Obdurate, unbelieving. Now began
The executioners to spread his arms [palms,
Upon the beam transverse, and through his
(Monsters of cruelty !) and through his feet
They drove their spiked nails ; whilst at the
clang
Of those dire engines every feeling heart
Utter'd a groan, that with the mingled shrieks

Of mothers and of children pierc'd the air.
The priests and elders gnash'd their teeth for
rage

And rancorous spite to hear him so bewail'd :
Womendropp'd down convuls'd, and on the spot
Let fall their burthens immature for birth. 560
Words fail to paint the horrors of that scene :
The very soldiers paus'd and stood aghast,
Musing what these lamentings might portend ;
Scarce dar'd they to pursue the dreadful work,
Awe-struck, and gazing on the face divine
Of the suspended Saviour. He, tho' stretch'd
Upon the rack of agony, to heav'n
Raising his eyes—" Father of mercy," cry'd,
" Forgive them, for they know not what they
do !"

O ruthless murd'ers ! could ye hear these
words 570

And yet persist ? Blasphemers ! can ye read
And not adore ? The people stand at gaze :
The rulers, eager to provoke anew
Their quailing resolution, with one voice
Cry out amain—" Ah ! thou, that on the cross
Now hangest....thou, that boastedst to destroy
Our temple and rebuild it in three days,
Where art thou ? If thou be the very CHRIST,
The King of Israel, now come down, descend
And save thyself ; this seeing, we will then

Confess thee and believe. But 'tis in vain ;
He hears not...he replies not...he expires :
Others he sav'd ; himself he cannot save."

Peace, peace, revilers ! nor expect reply :
Think not that CHRIST, thus dying for mankind,
Will from his great commission turn aside
And stop the sacrifice and quit the cross,
On which his body offer'd up for sin
As on an altar lies. Your taunts he hears ;
Yet will he not descend call'd down by you, 590
Nor at the door of death shrink back and leave
Short of perfection his all-glorious work.
But wait the time, and greater sign than this
Ye shall behold, when, rising from the dead
And incorruptible, he shall return
On earth, triumphant o'er the cross and death.
Yet, such is the perverseness of your hearts,
Him nor descending would ye now believe,
Nor re-ascending would ye then confess.

And now behold ! on either side the cross 600
Of CHRIST a wretched malefactor hung,
Groaning and writhing in the pangs of death :
When one of these, encourag'd by the taunts
Of the reviling priests, scornful exclaims—
"Hear'st thou not what they say ? If thou be

CHRIST,

Why art thou in this torture ? Save thyself,
And us thy fellows from this cross redeem,"

This when his penitent companion heard,
New horrors smote his heart...his fault'ring voice
He rais'd, and thus the blasphemy rebuk'd : 610

“ Hast thou no fear of God, expiring wretch?
Stretch'd as thou art upon the tree of death,
Hast thou no terror for the wrath to come ?
And truly we the merited reward
Of our ill deeds receive ; but this just Man,
What hath he done ? In him no fault is found.”

This said, the penitent, with faith inspir'd,
Upon the Saviour turn'd his dying eyes,
And, “ Lord !” he cry'd, with supplicating voice,
“ When to thy heav'nly kingdom thou shalt come,
Oh then remember me !”—To him the Lord—
“ I tell thee of a truth : this very day
Thou shalt be found in paradise with me.”

Oh ! words of joy, that breathe into the ear,
Of the expiring penitent the pledge
Of pardon and acceptance : Words, that waft
The soul, yet hovering on the lips of faith,
Into the heav'n of heav'ns ; with grateful heart
We hail the glorious promise, which unfolds
The gates of bliss, and present entrance gives
To the repentant sinner. Now no more
Conjecture ponders on the life to come ;
Our dying Saviour draws aside the veil,
Through which dim reason caught a doubtful
glimpse

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 308

shadowy realms, that, stretch'd beyond the
grave,

sian scenes in clouds and mist involv'd.

with this comfort take the caution too ;

who shall say what penitence was his,

it earn'd this promise ? Fatally he errs,

whose hope fore-runs repentance—who pre-

sumes

640

that God will pardon when he's tir'd of sin,

and like a stale companion casts it off.

! arrogant, delusive, impious thought,

meditate commodious truce with heav'n,

when death's swift arrow smites him unprepar'd,

and that protracted moment never comes,

comes too late. Turn, then, presumptuous man,

and to the other sinner on the cross,

who died reviling ; there behold thy doom !

Thou, too, the Virgin Mother of our Lord, 650

the angelic salutation hail'd

standst above women, thou amidst the group

sympathizing mourners at that hour

standst present, when th' incarnate Virtue, born

thine immaculate womb, impregn'd of heav'n,

hangs on the cross expiring. He from thence

looks thee, disconsolate, a dying look

tenderest pity cast, and at thy side

standing the meek disciple whom he lov'd,

as both address'd : " Woman, behold thy Son ;

Son, look upon thy mother !"—Sacred charge,
 And piously fulfill'd.—Now darkness fell
 On all the region round ; the shrowded sun
 From the impen'tent earth withdrew his light :
 " I thirst !" the Saviour cry'd, and lifting up
 His eyes in agony, " My God, my God !
 Ah ! why hast thou forsaken me ?" exclaim'd.

Yet deem him not forsaken of his God :
 Beware that error : 'Twas the mortal part
 Of his compounded nature breathing forth 670
 Its last sad agony, that so complain'd :
 Doubt not that veil of sorrow was withdrawn,
 And heav'nly comfort to his soul vouchsaf'd,
 Ere thus he cried—" Father ! into thy hands
 My spirit I commend : " Then bow'd his head
 And died. Now GABRIEL and his heav'nly
 choir

Of minist'ring angels hov'ring o'er the cross
 Receiv'd his sp'rit, at length from mortal pangs
 And fleshly pris'n set free, and bore it thence
 Upon their wings rejoicing. Then behold 680
 A prodigy that to the world announc'd
 A new religion and dissolv'd the old :
 The temple's sacred vail was rent in twain
 From top to bottom 'midst th' attesting shocks
 Of earthquake and the rending up of graves :
 Now those mysterious symbols, heretofore
 Curtain'd from vulgar eyes, and holiest deem'd

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 205

'holies, were display'd to public view :
The mercy-seat with its cherubic wings
Overshadow'd and the golden ark beneath 690
Covering the testimony, now through the rent
That dissever'd vail first saw the light ;
The world redeem'd had now no further need
Of types and emblems, dimly shadowing forth
The angry Deity withdrawn from sight,
And canopied in clouds : Him face to face
Now in full light reveal'd the dying breath
His dear Son appeas'd, and purchas'd peace
And reconcilment for offending man.
Thus the partition wall, by Moses built, 700
CHRIST was levell'd, and the Gentile world
Enter'd the breach by their great Captain led
To the throne of grace, opening himself
Through his own flesh a new and living way.
Then were the oracles of God made known
To all the nations, sprinkled by the blood
Of Jesus, and baptiz'd into his death ;
Which was the birth-right of the elder-born,
Heirs of the promise, forfeited ; whilst they,
From sin had erst in bondage held, made free
From sin, and servants of the living God,
Now gain'd the gift of God, eternal life.
When as these signs and prodigies were seen
To those who watch'd the cross, conviction smote
Their fear-struck hearts : The sun at noon-day
Dark,

The earth convulsive underneath their feet,
And the firm rocks, in shiver'd fragments rent,
Rous'd them at once to tremble and believe.
Then was our Lord by heathen lips confess'd,
When the centurion cry'd : " In very truth 720
This righteous Person was the Son of God ;"
The rest, in heart assenting, stood abash'd,
Watching in silence the tremendous scene.
The recollection of his gracious acts,
His dying pray'rs and their own impious taunts
Now rose in sad review ; too late they wish'd
The deed undone, and, sighing, smote their
breasts. [forth,

Straight from God's presence went that angel
Whose trumpet shall call up the sleeping dead
At the last day, and bade the saints arise 730
And come on earth to hail this promis'd hour,
The day-spring of salvation. Forth they came
From their dark tenements, their shadowy forms
Made visible as in their fleshly state,
And through the holy city here and there
Frequent they gleam'd, by night, by day with fear
And wonder seen of many : Holy seers,
Prophets, and martyrs from the grave set free,
And the first-fruits of the redeemed dead.
They, who with CHRIST transfigur'd on the
mount
Were seen of his disciples in a cloud

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 207

Of dazzling glory, now, in form distinct,
Mingling amidst the public haunts of men,
Struck terror to all hearts : Ezekiel there,
The captive seer, to whom on Chebar's banks
The heav'ns were open'd, and the fatal roll
Held forth, with dire denunciations fill'd
Of lamentation, mourning and of woe,
Now falling fast on Israel's wretched race :
He too was there, Hilkiab's holy son, 750
With loins close girt and glowing lips of fire
By God's own finger touch'd : There might be
seen

The youthful prophet, Belteshazzar nam'd
Of the Chaldees, interpreter of dreams,
Knowledge of God bestow'd, in visions skill'd
And fair and learn'd and wise : The Baptist
here,

Girt in his hairy mantle, frowning stalk'd,
And, pointing to his ghastly wound, exclaim'd :
" Ye vipers ! whom my warning could not
move

Timely to flee from the impending wrath 760
Now fallen on your heads ; whom I indeed
With water, CHRIST hath now with fire baptiz'd :
Barren ye were of fruits, which I prescrib'd
Meet for repentance ; and behold ! the axe
Is laid to the unprofitable root
Of every sapless tree, hewn down, condemn'd,

And cast into the fire. Lo! these are they,
These shadowy forms now floating in your sight,
These are the harbingers of ancient days,
Who witness'd the Messias, and announc'd 770
His coming upon earth. Mark with what scorn
Silent they pass you by : Them had ye heard...
Them had ye noted with a patient mind,
Ye had not crucified the Lord of Life :
He of these stones to Abraham shall raise up
Children, than you more worthy of his stock;
And now his winnowing fan is in his hand,
With which he'll purge his floor, and having
stor'd

The precious grain in garners, will consume
With fire unquenchable the refuse chaff. 780

Thus the terrific Vision in the ears
Of the astonish'd multitude declaim'd
With threat'ning voice, and wrung their con-
scious hearts ; [scorn

Whilst the blaspheming priests, who in their
Triumphant saw the Saviour of the world
Expiring on the cross and deem'd him lost,
Now by the resurrection of the saints,
Usher'd on earth with prodigies and signs,
Confounded and amaz'd, began to doubt
If yet the sepulchre had power to keep 790
Its crucified possessor safe in hold,
And with these thoughts perplex'd, masking
their fears

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 209

Under pretence of caution, they repair
To PILATE and demand a Roman guard
To watch the tomb of CHRIST ; and then they
add—

For we remember that Deceiver said,
Whilst he was yet alive, “ after three days
will again arise ;” therefore we pray
Command the sepulchre to be made sure
Till the third day, lest his disciples come 800
By night, and craftily remove him thence ;
So the last error shall outgo the first.”

But PILATE, whose unrighteous judgment
still
sate heavy on his heart, had little care
For what might them befall, and to their suit
Briefly reply'd—“ Why do ye ask of me
That custody, which in yourselves ye have ?
Take your own watch and to their charge com-
mit

The safeguard of that body, which, though dead,
Keeps yet alive your fears : 'Tis your own cause,
As such I leave it with you ; so begone !”

He said, and turn'd aside ; nor did they tempt
Further discourse, but murm'ring went their
way.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

[illegible]

5

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VII.

ARGUMENT OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

This book opens with the scene of Mount Calvary at the coming on of evening : Christ still hanging dead upon the cross, the disciples standing apart, and the holy women watching, amongst whom is the Blessed Virgin, supported by St. John, Christ having bequeathed her to his care. His address to her on this subject, and her reply. The soldiers come and break the legs of the two malefactors ; but finding Christ already dead, they pierce his heart with a spear, and blood and water issue from the wound. They take him down from the cross, and lay him in the sepulchre. His spirit, in the meanwhile, is conveyed by the angels into the regions of Death ; that region described, and the distant prospect of the bottomless pit, where the souls of the wicked are in torment. Christ points out those scenes to Gabriel, and instructs him as to the future objects of his descent into this gloomy region. Satan, expelled from earth, falls prostrate at the foot of the throne of Death ; he makes suit to that power for protection. Death rejects his intercessions. The person and palace of the King of Terrors described. The triumphant entry of Christ. Satan is hurled into the bottomless pit, and there bound by the strong angel ; the horrors of that dreadful abode are represented. Death humbles himself before the Redeemer of mankind, and, conscious that his power is overthrown, tenders his crown to Christ as his conqueror. He lays the key at his feet, which sets free the souls of the Saints, who are destined to be partakers of the first resurrection. This key is given to Gabriel, with instructions for their release. Christ, in his reply to Death, forwarns him of his doom ; but signifies to him that the dissolution of his power will not be immediate. The approach of the Saints concludes the book.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK VII.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

NOW Hesperus renew'd his evening lamp,
And hung it forth amid the turbid sky,
To mark the close of this portentous day :
The lab'ring sun, in his mid-course eclips'd,
Darkling at length had reach'd his western goal ;
And now it seem'd as if all nature slept,
O'erspent and wearied with convulsive throes.
Upon his cross the martyr'd Saviour hung ;
Pale thro' the twilight gleam'd his breathless
corpse

And silvery white, as when the moon-beam plays
On the smooth surface of the glassy lake ;
His thorn-crown'd head upon his breast reclin'd ;
His arms were wide out-spread, as if in act
T' embrace and welcome the converted world :
So were they late expanded, when he cry'd—
“ Come, all ye heavy laden, come to me,
And I will give you rest !” Death hath not dar'd
To rob those features of one heav'nly grace ;
Nor had the worm authority to taint

That incorruptible and hallow'd shrine 20
Wherein his purity had deign'd to dwell.
The living saints here mingling with the dead
Stood round, in pensive meditation wrapt,
Silent spectators of the awful scene :
There his disciples, in a group apart,
Like frightened sheep that cluster in a storm,
'Throng'd each on other, interchanging looks
Of sorrow and despair : no voice was heard,
No utterance but of sighs ; though all had need
Of comfort, none had comfort to bestow. 30
But PETER, in whose self-accusing breast [out
Grief roll'd in tempests, had the whilst chos'n
A solitary spot, where at his length
Outstretch'd, with face incumbent on the ground,
He lay like one whom fortune had cast off,
Of all hope 'reft, most wretched and forlorn.

There too the holy Mother might be seen,
Like Rizpah, watching o'er her murder'd son,
Rooted in earth, a monument of woe.
Beside her, bath'd in sympathizing tears, 40
First in his Master's love, as meek of soul,
Stood JOHN, adopted by his dying Lord
Son and supporter of that mournful saint.
At length with reverend love he turn'd his eyes
Upon the Virgin Mother, and thus spake :

“ Oh thou ! participant with God himself
In his incarnate Offspring, if I claim

The glorious title, which my dying Lord
 On me, thy servant ever, now thy son,
 Gracious bequeath'd, let not my words offend. 50
 High honor, and a trust than life more dear,
 Hath CHRIST by this adoption deign'd to cast
 On me unmeriting ; yet well I heard
 Those sacred words—" Mother, behold thy son ;
 Son, look upon thy mother !" Yes, I heard,
 And treasuring in my heart the rich bequest,
 Bow'd and obey'd : E'en then my zeal had spoke
 The dictates of devotion, had I dar'd
 To break the awful silence of that hour,
 Or sacrilegiously divert the ear 60
 Of mute attention, whilst those lips divine,
 Those living oracles, had breath to move ;
 Now mute, alas ! for He is now no more,
 Who had the words of life : Our hope is quench'd,
 Our glory vanish'd. See ! the deed is done :
 Those murderers have kill'd the Prince of Peace.
 Cold on the cross, and stiff'ning in the wind,
 To the rude elements his corpse is left ;
 Nor is there found, who shall provide a grave
 For the sad relics of the Son of God. 70
 But lo ! the heav'ns, that three long hours have
 mourn'd
 In darkness, now throw off their sable shroud :
 The earth no longer quakes beneath our feet—
 The shatter'd rocks subside—Nature is calm,

The sun unmask, and through disparted clouds
 With ruddy twilight streaks the western sky.
 And may not we, since God hath now withdrawn
 His terrors and assuag'd the wrathful sky,
 May not we hope, that as his light revives
 At the third hour, so of his blessed Son 80
 The promis'd resurrection to new life
 At the third day shall also come to pass ?
 When, as the sun emerging from eclipse
 Darkness dispels, so CHRIST from out the grave
 Arising, shall dispel our dark despair ?”

To him the holy mother thus replied :
 “Thou meek disciple, in thy Master's love
 Pre-eminently blest, since He, whose will
 Should govern, so decrees it, from this hour
 Henceforth I lodge thee in a mother's heart 90
 And hold thee as my son ; for I perceive
 CHRIST from his human nature is withdrawn,
 And to mortality hath render'd back
 All that from me a mortal he receiv'd ;
 His incorruptible now lives with God,
 And in that glory I no part must claim ;
 Flesh cannot share with spirit. Henceforth
 thou,
 Thou art my son adopted in the place
 Of that incarnate Virtue, of whose birth
 Miraculous the eastern star gave sign, 100
 And angels witness'd him the Son of God.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 217

**And now, behold ! what wonders mark his death :
Whence are these prodigies ? What but the hand
Of God can shake the pillars of the earth,
Seal up the sun, and rend these rocks in twain...
Turn day to night, tear down the temple veil,
Break up the graves and bid the saints come
forth ?**

**Lo, where they pass as sensible to sight
As in broad day substantial man to man,
And can we ask if he be very CHRIST, 110
Whom stars and angels usher'd into birth ?
Can we doubt Him on whom the Sp'rit of God
Dove-like descended ? Can we stop our ears
Against a voice from heav'n ? Are we so blind,
Dull, and insensible, not to behold
That sun emergent, and these moving shapes,
That to re-visit earth have left their graves,
Awaken'd as from sleep ? If these can rise—
If these, whose bones are moulder'd into dust,
On whom the worm hath fed for ages, men 120
As mortal as ourselves, can re-ascend
Out of the pit, do not these signs bespeak
His second coming, who is LORD and CHRIST ?
He shall, He shall return upon the earth
Victorious over death, and we, though now
Humbled in heart and for a season sad,
Yet wav'ring not in faith and holding fast
The anchor of our hope, shall yet again**

Behold his glory ; and as now his death
 Turns day to night, his resurrection then 130
 Shall into joy convert our present gloom.
 But see, where PETER prostrate on the earth
 Is lost in sorrow : Haste and bid him rise ;
 Tell him the day's at hand when he must work.
 Hath he not heard, the servant shall not sleep
 In his Lord's absence ? Strengthen thou his
 heart !"

So spake these saints, and each to other gave
 Alternate solace ; faith inspiring hope,
 And hope assuaging woe. At PETER's side
 Behold the meek disciple—" Up !" he cries,
 " Awake and put on strength : The Virgin
 Saint,

The Mother of our Lord, bids thee awake.
 Unprofitable grief availeth nought,
 But godly sorrow is approv'd in works [dead,
 Meet for repentance. Up ! for CHRIST, though
 Yet speaketh, and shall come again on earth :
 Woe to that servant, therefore, whom his Lord
 Shall find thus sleeping ; great shall be his
 wrath." [up ;

This said, he reach'd his hand and rais'd him
 He stood and spake—" Servant of CHRIST ap-
 prov'd, 150

Thee and thy blessed Sender I obey :
 Yet doth my heart, by deep remorse subdu'd,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 219

Press downward to the dust. A wretch I am,
Who hath deny'd his Lord : What can I do,
A miserable man ? O righteous JOHN,
When thou shalt spread abroad, as sure thou wilt,
The direful doings of this fatal day,
And publish to mankind the wond'rous love
Of CHRIST thus dying for them, I conjure thee
Be faithful to the truth—screen not my crime,
Foul though it be, but let the nations know
PETER, who vaunted of himself, was false ;
So shall they reap instruction from my shame,
And by despising me correct themselves."

Thus spake the contrite saint, when now the
priests,

Whose custom was upon this solemn eve
To purge their Golgotha from human blood,
Sent forth their guard official to remove
CHRIST and the slaves convict before the dawn
Of that great day, too hallow'd to permit 170
Their bodies fest'ring on th' ill-omen'd cross.

And lo ! the soldiers so encharg'd arrive,
Survey the victims and begin the work :

But first the pond'rous sledge with horrid crash
Descending breaks the knees and ankle joints
Of these two criminals ; for stubborn life
Still hover'd on their lips, and now and then
Their heaving bosoms fetch'd a deep-drawn sigh,
Like the slow swell of seas without a wind.

But when the Saviour's body they approach'd
 And saw there needed not a second blow
 To make his death secure, the word of God
 Prophetic mov'd their else obdurate hearts
 To break no limb ; yet one so destin'd, thrust
 His spear into his side, and forthwith flow'd
 Water and blood from the heart-piercing wound ;
 So deep the stab, that to life's citadel,
 Had life remain'd, the mortal point had reach'd
 And there had finish'd it. Meanwhile, behold !
 JOSEPH arrives ; a counsellor was he, 190
 But not for death, and rich and just withal ;
 In Ramoth born, where Samuel first drew breath,
 And as his heart in righteousness and faith
 Stood firm with CHRIST whilst living, so his zeal
 An honorable interment to bestow
 On his dead master, prompted him to make
 Bold suit to PILATE for the lifeless corpse,
 Nor fail'd he of his suit ; therefore he came,
 So favor'd, to receive the precious charge
 Of those dear relics, and with decent rites 200
 Commit them to the grave : Spear'd to the
 heart,
 And death with double diligence ensur'd,
 The body they take down ; the hands and feet
 Pierc'd thro' with nails, and all besmear'd with
 blood,
 (O piteous spectacle !) which to behold

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 221

Bathes every angel face in heav'n with tears !
Accursed deicides ! the time comes on,
When every mark your sacrilegious hands
Have printed on that corpse, shall be a seal
To testify against you, every gash 210
Unclos'd shall with its living lips proclaim
CHRIST in his human attributes renew'd,
Corporeal, yet immortal : Then the hand
Of him who doubts shall probe those gaping
wounds,
And by the evidence of sense compel
The faithless and reluctant to believe.
And now they place the body on the bier,
Cleans'd of the blood, and wrapt in seemly cloths :
Then under guard convey it to the vault
Hewn in the rock, where never corpse was laid,
And there consign it to its dark abode,
Rolling a massy fragment to the door,
Unwieldy, vast ; and having seal'd the stone,
They post their centinels, and so depart. [free
Meanwhile th' unhoused spirit of CHRIST, set
From gross communion with his earthly clay,
Borne with the meteor's speed upon the wings
Of mightiest cherubim, had now approach'd
The dark confines of Death's engulph'd domain :
Here at the barrier of that vast profound 230
On the firm adamant, from whence uprose
The tow'ring structure of hell's ebony gate,

The heav'nly visitant descending bade
His cherub bearers stoop their wings, on which
As in a plummy chariot he rode ;
And now alighted on the dreadful brink,
'The Saviour paus'd and downward cast his eye
O'er that immeasurable blank, the grave
Of universal Nature, founded then
And charter'd to the gloomy powers of sin 240
And Death, sin-born, when the primeval pair
Lost immortality and fell from God.
'The starry lamps of heav'n here lost their light,
No sun-beam ever reach'd this dismal realm :
Yet in CHRIST's sp'rit divine that living light,
Which from the Father of creation flow'd
Before all time, inherently supplied
Self-furnish'd vision to explore the bounds
Of that oblivious pit, in whose dark womb
Myriads of unredeemed souls were plung'd ;
All who of human birth had pass'd that gate
From righteous Abel, the first fruit of death,
To him, whose heart had newly ceas'd to beat,
Were in that gulph immers'd. At farthest end
Of that obscure a pillary cloud arose [steam'd;
Of sulph'rous smoke, that from hell's crater
Whence here and there by intermittent gleams
Blue flashing fires burst forth, that sparkling
blaz'd
Up to the iron roof, whose echoing vault

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 223

Resounded ever with the dol'rous groans 260
Of the sad crew beneath : Thence might be
heard

The wailing suicide's remorseful plaint....
The murd'rer's yelling scream, and the loud cry
Of tyrants in that fiery furnace hurl'd :
Vain cry ! the unmitigated furies urge
Their ruthless task, and to the cauldron's edge
With ceaseless toil huge blocks of sulphur roll,
Pil'd mountains high to feed the greedy flames :
All these, th' accursed brood of Sin, were once
The guilty pleasures, the false joys, that lur'd 270
Their sensual vot'ries to th' infernal pit :
Them their fell mother, watchful o'er the work,
With eye that sleep ne'er clos'd and snaky
scourge

Still waving o'er their heads, forever plies
To keep the fiery deluge at its height ;
And stops her ears against the clam'rous din
Of those tormented, who for mercy call,
Age after age implor'd, and still deny'd.

These when th' all-present Spirit of CHRIST
descry'd

At distance tossing in the sulph'rous lake 280
And heard their dismal groans, the conscious
sense

Of human weakness by experience earn'd
In his own mortal body now put off,

And recollection that Himself of late
 In his sublunar pilgrimage had prov'd
 Temptations like theirs, drew from his soul
 A sigh of nat'ral pity as from man
 To man although in merited distress :
 But when his human sympathy gave place
 To judgment better weigh'd, and riper thoughts
 Congenial with the Godhead re-assum'd,
 The justice of their doom, th' abhorrence due
 To their vile deeds, by voluntary act
 Of will, left free, committed in despite
 Of conscience moving them to better thoughts,
 Turn'd him indignant from the loathed sight
 Of these impenitents : when, after pause,
 To GABRIEL, chief of the cherubic host
 And late his strength'ning angel, thus he spake :

“ GABRIEL, or e'er from this high steep we
 launch 300

With prone descent into this gloomy vast;
 This shadowy dark inane, the realm of Death;
 After so swift a race through all the spheres
 From earth to this hell's portal, it behoves
 Thee and thy plumed cohort to recruit .
 The vigor of your wings ; for sure I am
 That in this subterranean we shall find
 No breeze from heav'n's pure æther to give aid
 To motion, or uphold in steady poise
 Your feath'ry vans outstretch'd ; nor may we
 look 31

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For star or planet, or one straggling ray
From circumlucient sun, to guide our course
Through this obscure domain of Night and
Death.

Nor less behoves thee, gentle as thou art,
Friendliest to man of all heav'n's angel host,
And for each task of mercy and of love
First in the choice of God, to arm thy heart
For the sad spectacles, the dismal scenes,
Which we must needs encounter in this gulph
Of human misery, this world of woes, 320
Fit residence for SATAN and his crew
Of outcast angels ; sad reverse to thee,
Inhabitant of heav'n : And now, behold !
Where hell's infernal pit with horrid glare
Flames through the dismal gloom ; there, but
that God

In mercy films thine arch-angelic eye,
Such myriads in that ever-burning lake
Of souls tormented thou would'st else discern,
As would appal thy nature ; but these scenes
From thee, a sp'rit so loving to mankind, 330
So melting soft to pity, are withheld :
No mercy can I meditate for them
Impenitent...no embassy of peace
Have I in charge...no respite, till the trump
Of general resurrection calls them up
At the last day of judgment, then to hear

Their crimes rehears'd...their blasphemies ex-
pos'd... [plots,

Their envyings, frauds, revilings, treach'ries,
And ev'ry secret of their hearts unmask'd

By an all-righteous Judge, who shall pronounce
Their final condemnation, and decree

Their present pains perpetual. We, meanwhile,
To other regions shall divert our course,

From them and from their torments far apart,
Regions of night and silence, where the souls

Of righteous men in their oblivious caves

Sleep out the time till their Deliv'rer comes

To wake them from their trance...dissolve the
spell

Of their enchanter, Death, and set them free

To range the fields of Paradise, where flows, 350

As from a fountain by God's presence fed,

Beatitude surpassing human thought,

Pleasures unseen, unnumber'd, unconceiv'd."

This said, from those high battlements the
Dove

Of Peace, upon Redemption's errand sent,

Borne on the wings of his cherubic choir,

Descended swift, and through the drowsy void

To Death's terrific palace steer'd his flight.

Here the arch-foe of man, from earth expell'd

By man's Redeemer, newly had arriv'd, 360

But fear-struck, and in like disastrous trim

With war-worn Sisera, when in his flight,
From the victorious Naphthalite he came
To ask protection at false Jael's tent,
And ruin found instead. 'The whirlwind's blast
Had shatter'd his proud form ; now scorch'd by
fires,

Now driv'n to regions of perpetual frost
Beyond extremest Saturn's wint'ry sphere,
No middle course kept he, nor had his feet
From their ærial journey once found rest, 370
Till, at the threshold of Death's gloomy throne,
Down on the solid adamant he fell
Precipitate at once, and lay entranc'd,
Of arch-angelic majesty the wreck.

Scar'd at the hideous crash, and all aghast,
Death scream'd amain, then wrapt himself in
clouds,

And in his dark pavilion trembling sate
Mantled in night. And now the prostrate fiend
Rear'd his terrific head with lightnings scorch'd,
And furrow'd deep with scars of livid hue ; 380
Then stood erect and roll'd his blood-shot eyes
To find the ghastly vision of grim Death,
Who at the sudden downfall of his sire
Startled, and of his own destruction warn'd,
Had shrunk from sight, and to a misty cloud
Dissolv'd, hung low'ring o'er his shrouded throne.
When SATAN, whose last hope was now at stake,

Impatient for the interview, exclaim'd—

“Where art thou, Death? Why hide thyself
from him [king ;

Of whom thou art? Come forth, thou grisly
And though to suitor of immortal mould
Thy refuge be denied, yet at my call,
Thy father's call, come forth and comfort me,
Thou gaunt anatomy, with one short glimpse
Of those dry bones, in which alone is peace
And that oblivious sleep, for which I sigh.”

He said, and now a deep and hollow groan,
Like roar of distant thunders, shook the hall,
And from before the cloud-envelop'd throne,
The adamant pavement burst in twain 400
With hideous crash self-open'd, and display'd
A subterranean chasm, whose yawning vault,
Deep as the pit of Acheron, forbade
All nearer access to the shad'wy king.
Whereat the imprison'd winds, that in its womb
Were cavern'd, 'gan to heave their yeasty waves
In bubbling exhalations, till at once
Their eddying vapors working upwards burst
From the broad ventenfranchis'd, when, behold!
The cloud that late around the throne had pour'd
More than Egyptian darkness, now began
To lift its fleecy skirts, till through the mist
Th' imperial phantom gleam'd; monster de-
form'd,

Enormous, terrible; from heel to scalp
 One dire anatomy ; his giant bones [hung
 Star'd through the shrivell'd skin, that loosely
 On his sepulchral carcass ; round his brows
 A cypress wreath, tiara-like, he wore,
 With night shade and cold hemlock intertwin'd ;
 Behind him hung his quiver'd store of darts 420
 Wing'd with the raven's plume ; his fatal bow
 Of deadly yew, tall as Goliah's spear,
 Propp'd his unerring arm ; about his throne,
 (If throne it might be call'd, which was compos'd
 Of human bones, as in a charnel pil'd,)
 A hideous group of dire diseases stood,
 Sorrows and pains and agonizing plagues,
 His ghastly satellites, and, ev'n than these
 More terrible, ambition's slaught'ring sons,
 Heroes and conquerors styl'd on earth ; but here
 Doom'd to ignoble drudgery, employ'd
 To do his errands in the loathsome vault,
 And tend corruption's never-dying worm,
 To haunt the catacombs and ransack graves,
 Where some late pop'lous city is laid waste
 By the destroying pestilence, or storm'd
 By murd'ring Russ or Tartar blood-besmeard,
 And furious on the desp'rate breach to plant
 His eagle or his crescent on the piles
 Of mangled multitudes, and flout the sky 440
 With his victorious banners. Now a troop

Of shrouded ghosts, upon a signal giv'n
 By their terrific monarch, start to sight,
 Each with a torch funereal in his grasp,
 That o'er the hall diffus'd a dying light,
 Than darkness' self more horrible : The walls
 Of that vast cenotaph, hung round with spears
 Falchions and pole-axes and plumed helms,
 Shew'd like the arm'ry of some warlike State :
 There every mortal weapon might be seen, 450
 Each implement of old or new device,
 Which savage nature or inventive art
 Furnish'd to arm the ruffian hand of war,
 And deal to man the life-destroying stroke :
 And them betwixt at intervals were plac'd
 The crowned skeletons of mighty kings,
 Cæsars and caliphs and barbarian chiefs, [shrink,
 Monsters, whose swords had made creation
 And frighted peace and science from the earth.

Pondering the scene, in mute amazement rapt,
 The lost arch-angel stood, when soon the voice
 Of Death, as from the tombs low murmuring,
 thus

Bespoke attention—"What uncivil cause,
 Prince of the air, provokes thee to offend
 Against the peaceful charter of these realms
 By voice thus rude and clam'rous ? Know'st
 thou not

I reign by privilege, though son not slave

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Of thee, heav'n-exil'd ? Here no place hast thou,
For here is peace ; no part in this domain
To thee and to thy rebel host belongs : 470
They in the flames of Tartarus, but we
Dwell with the silent worm : 'The pow'r we have
O'er man's corruptible and mortal part
Ends with the body ; here the bones may sleep,
For these anatomies disturb us not :
But for the spark unquenchable, the soul
Immortal, which survives the fleeting breath,
Of that we take no charge ; that must abide
In other regions, its appointed lot
Of misery or bliss. What then hath Death 480
To do with SATAN ? Can the son, who drew
Existence from the father, quench that sp'rit
Which God decreed eternal ? Will those fires
Cease at my word ? Hell will not hear my voice,
Nor can the howlings of the infernal pit
Enter my ears. Ask not repose of me,
Tormented fiend : There is no grave for sin,
No sleep for SATAN ! fall'n from heav'n thou art ;
There thou hast no abode ; fall'n now from
earth,
Where is thy lodging ? Where, but in those
flames.
Pass on, then, in thy course, nor loiter here, *
For hell expects thee : Wert thou here to stay,
Death in destroying thee himself destroys."

Whereto th' unwelcome visitant replied :
" Inhospitable pow'r ! and is it thus
Thou greet'st a father in his extreme need,
Suppliant for leave to draw a moment's breath
In thy pale presence, 'till this furious blast,
'That follow'd me from earth, shall spend its rage
And cease to howl through the profound of hell?
If in thy heartless trunk no mem'ry dwells
Of what I was, Oh ! teach me to forget
What now I am, and make my senses dull
To pain, as thine to gratitude are lost :
But if thy mind be present to record
My fall from bliss, will it not also serve
To put thee in remembrance how that fall
Bestow'd on thee a station and a name ?
Had I not fall'n from heav'n, man had not lost
The joys of Paradise, immortal joys, 510
Till I destroy'd them ; who then but myself,
Exil'd from God, brought death into the world...
Gave thee the sepulchre for thy domain,
And every mortal body for thy prey ?
Whose hand but SATAN'S, thankless as thou art,
Plac'd that victorious wreath upon thy brow,
Arm'd thee for war and bade thee be a king ?
And what doth Satan now demand of Death ?
What, but a moment's respite, the small boon
Of hospitable shelter, where to lay 520
My aching head and rest my weary wing ?

This to the father can the son refuse ?
 I ask no more. If CHRIST, from whom I fly,
 Pursues me to this pit, and into hell
 Descending shall repass her gloomy gates
 Guarded by sin, that barrier lost, farewell
 To all thy greatness ! Where shall be thy sting,
 O Death, and where thy victory, O Grave ?
 Then to have harbor'd SATAN shall not add
 One feather to the balance of thy fate ; 530
 All must be lost together ; I to flames
 Consign'd ; thou, phantom, into air dissolv'd."

"No more of this vain arguing," Death re-
 ply'd ;

"My peace and my repose I can but deal
 As God decrees, and as he wills withhold :
 Thus wrangling to the latest hour of time,
 Nothing, O SATAN, could'st thou wring from me
 But the same answer, and the same despair :
 I with mortality alone confer ;
 Thou art a deathless spirit : If my pow'r 540
 Cannot annihilate the soul of man,
 How then of angel ? Guilty thou hast been,
 Conscious must ever be, and therefore curst.
 Of me complaining thou condemn'st thyself,
 The righteous ever are at peace with Death ;
 Thou art not of their number. Sp'rit unblest,
 Author of man's revolt and all things ill,
 The hell which thou hast peopled, is thine own.

**"Lift up your heads," the heav'nly chorus sung,
"Lift up your heads ye everlasting gates,
And CHRIST the King of Glory shall come in :"
Bright as the sun his presence ; darkness fled
Down to the centre ; SATAN on the earth
Fell motionless ; Death trembled on his throne,
And call'd his shadowy guards—they with loud
 shrieks**

**Vanish'd in air, whilst from the gulph profound
Blue lightnings flash'd and deep-mouth'd thun-
ders roar'd,**

When CHRIST, with eye severe on SATAN turn'd,
Bade the storm cease, and thus address'd the
fiend : [brink

" Well art thou found, thou serpent, on the
 Of thy last home, this horrible abyss,
 For thee and for thine impious crew prepar'd.
 Man, from his God by thy corruption turn'd,
 Is by my death receiv'd into the peace
 Of his offended Maker, and if faith

Opens his way to heav'n in righteousness
And true conversion, Death cannot retain
His soul in darkness, nor thy crafty wiles
Puzzle his path and damp his glowing zeal ;
But thou presumptuous, who hast had the world
To range at will, and from God's altars pluck'd
Their consecrated honours, falsely view'd
Those spoils, by sufferance yielded, as the prize

**Of thine own proper victory. Behold !
These are thy triumphs ; in this pit receive 680
Thy folly's confutation, and the doom
Of woe eternal on thy sin denounc'd."**

**He said, nor other answer SATAN gave
Than one deep groan rent from his lab'ring
breast.**

**The strong, vindictive Angel, to whose charge
The key of that infernal pit belong'd,
Now seiz'd him in his grasp, and from the
ground**

**Lifting his pond'rous bulk, such vigor dwelt
In arm celestial, headlong down at once,
Down hurl'd him to the bottom of the gulph,
Then follow'd on the wing: His yelling cries
Death heard, whilst terror shiver'd every bone :
Not so the choir cherubic ; they with joy
Beheld Redemption's triumph in the fall
Of that Great Dragon, enemy of man,
That ancient Serpent, now, with bruised head
And sting-bereft, hurl'd down into the pit :
Whereat, in heav'nly concert they begin
To raise their tuneful voices, and sing forth
Praise to the Lamb of God, and joyful strain
Of gratulation to the saints redeem'd—**

**"Now is salvation come and strength and
power...**

The kingdom of our God and of his CHRIST :

Now is that railing and malignant foe
Cast down into the pit, which day and night
Accus'd our righteous brethren to their God :
Now are they made victorious by the blood
Of the Redeeming Lamb, and in the word
Of Truth, their fearless witness, thro' the world
Go forth against the anarchy of Sin, 660
A host of martyrs, faithful unto death ;
Therefore rejoice, ye heav'ns, and ye of earth
Inhabitants, awake to joy and hail
The day-spring of Salvation from on high."

SATAN, meanwhile, ten thousand fathoms deep
At bottom of the pit, a mangled mass
With shatter'd brain and broken limbs outspread,
Lay groaning on the adamantine rock :
Him the strong angel with ethereal touch 670
Made whole in form, but not to strength restor'd,
Rather to pain and the acuter sense
Of shame and torment ; hideous was the glare
Of his blood-streaming eyes, and loud he yell'd
For very agony, whilst on his limbs
The massy fetters, such as hell alone
Could forge in hottest sulphur, were infix'd
And rivetted in the perpetual stone :
Upon his back he lay extended, huge,
And hideous ruin : not a word vouchsaf'd
That vengeful angel, but with quick dispatch
Ply'd his commission'd task, then stretch'd the
wing

And upward flew ; for now th' infernal cave
Through all its vast circumference had giv'n
The dreadful warning, and began to close
Its rocky ribs upon th' imprison'd fiend ;
Fierce and more fierce as it approach'd became
The flaming concave ; thus compressed, the vault,
Red as metallic furnace, glow'd intense
With heat, that had the hideous den been less
Than adamant it had become a flood, 690
Or SATAN other than he was in sin
And arch-angelic strength pre-eminent,
He neither could have suffer'd nor deserv'd.
Panting he roll'd in streams of scalding sweat,
Parch'd with intolerable thirst, one drop
Of water then to cool his raging tongue
Had been a boon worth all his golden shrine.
Vain wish ! for now the pit had clos'd its mouth,
Nor other light remain'd than what the glare
Of those reverberating fires bestow'd : 700
Then all the dungeon round was thick beset
With horrid faces, threat'ning as they glar'd
Their haggard eyes upon him ; from hell's lake
Flocking they came, whole legions of the damn'd,
His worshippers on earth, sensual, profane,
Abominable in their lives, monsters of vice,
Blood-stain'd murderers, apostate kings,
And crowned tyrants some, tormented now
For their past crimes and into furies turn'd,

Accusing their betrayer. Curses dire, 710
 Hissings and tauntings now from every side
 Assail'd his ear ; on him, on him alone,
 From Cain, first murderer, to Iscariot, all,
 All with loud voices charg'd on him their sins,
 Their agonies, with imprecations urg'd
 For treble vengeance on his head accurst,
 Founder of hell, sole auther of their woe,
 And enemy avow'd of all makind.

Now when the King of Terrors had perceiv'd
 The pow'r of his new visitant, and saw 720
 SATAN engulph'd, and the devouring pit,
 Best barrier of his throne, forever clos'd,
 Descending from his state with heart abash'd,
 Conscious that pride would ill befriend him now
 In presence of his conqueror, at the feet
 Of CHRIST with low obeisance he put off
 The trophies of his brow, and on the knee,
 Stooping his vassal head, low homage paid,
 And suppliant thus his humble suit preferr'd :

“ Immortal King ! all glorious and all good,
 At whose great name befits that every knee
 In heav'n or earth or in these realms beneath
 Should bend adoring, let thy will prevail
 Here, as wherever else ! And sure I am
 'Tis not my power, but thine own wond'rous love,
 Consenting to the deed, hath brought thee here
 In pity to mankind to taste the cup

Of agony, and visit these sad shades,
Though deathless ; thence to re-ascend, as soon
Thou shalt, victorious to the realms of light. 740
I know thee for the CHRIST the Son of God,
Messias of the prophets long foreseen,
Yet of the unbelieving Jews despis'd,
Rejected ; for thou cam'st not in the pomp
Of temp'ral majesty, and only great
In patience, in humility, in love
And miracles of mercy. At thy feet,
This head uncrown'd thus stooping, I resign
All empire ; not on me let fall thy wrath
As on that bruised serpent. What am I ? 750
What is the sword, what is the pestilence,
And all my host of mortal ministers,
But servants of thy providence, a scourgè
And rod of vengeance, wherewith to chastise
Presumptuous, guilty pride ? Whose hand but
mine
Strikes terror to the atheist's harden'd heart ?
Who plucks the tyrant from his bloody car
And rolls him in the dust ? or at a blow
Strangles the curse in the blasphemer's throat ?
If on the martyr's head my axe descends, 760
The same hand plants a crown of glory there ;
And if in my dark caves the righteous sleep,
Peaceful they sleep ; I break not their repose,
For silence dwells with me, and night and rest.

**Behold the key inviolate that guards
Their hallow'd slumbers ; never did I yield,
Though oft solicited, this sacred pledge
To SATAN or his sin-defiled crew ;
Faithful I've kept it ever....faithful now
To thee their Saviour I resign my charge."** 770

This said, the golden badge of his command,
Rich and of heav'nly workmanship, with gems
Of azure, green, and purple thick emboss'd,
Humbly he laid at the REDEEMER'S feet :
He to the zeal of GABRIEL straight consign'd
Th' enlargement of those sp'rits to bliss pre-
ferr'd,

Fit minister for office so benign :
Whereat he bade sound forth the signal trumpet
Of the First Resurrection, heard of none
Save of those holy saints, elect of God, 780
Martyrs and prophets, call'd to live with CHRIST
In antecedent glory, till the day
Of gen'ral Resurrection shall awake
And summon into judgment all mankind.
Swift hied that friendly angel on the wing,
Swifter, for that, on gracious errand sent,
Joy urg'd him to put forth his utmost speed ;
Meanwhile, the heav'nly Visitant of Death
Upon that ghastly Vision turn'd his eyes,
And thus, in accent mild, address'd the shade :
" That I came down from heav'n and am the
CHRIST,

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ightly, O Death, thou hast pronounc'd ; yet
here

come not to destroy thy power at once,
not to set free the saints thou hold'st in thrall,
and call them to my peace ; but ev'n of these,
art till my second coming must abide :
of thee and all things of corruption bred
the term is fix'd ; God must be all in all :
at time, as man computes, hath yet to roll
through numerous ages ere the final trump
shall sound thy knell. I brought not upon earth
peace, but the sword ; the gospel I have preach'd
man will corrupt, misconstrue and pervert ;
or shall my Church be only drench'd with
blood

fits own martyrs—zealots shall arise,
liens to my humility and peace,
with more than pagan enmity inflam'd
each against other ; then shall ruthless war
and persecution, and fierce civil rage
savage the Christian world ; intol'rant pride,
surping pow'r infallible, shall send
its heralds forth with cursing in their mouths,
and fetters for man's conscience in their hands ;
they in the battle's front shall plant the cross,
and bid the unconverted nations kneel
under their conq'ring standard, and adopt
the creed of murderers, who, in the place

Of the pure bond of charity, present
A forged scroll blurr'd and defac'd with lies,
And impiously inscribe it with my name. 820
These are religion's traitors, and from them
An ample harvest shalt thou reap, O Death ;
Suffice it thee to know that for a while
Thou shalt be spar'd : And now no more : Be-
hold !

GABRIEL leads on the congregated Saints.
Vanish, pale phantom ! Give the ransom'd place."

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VIII.

ARGUMENT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

Christ, having closed his interview with Death, prepares to receive the Saints of the First Resurrection, now approaching, under the conduct of the angel Gabriel, and having ascended a mount in the midst of the congregation, appears to them in glory. They pay homage to their Redeemer in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving. He addresses them in reply, and assures them of the blessings of immortal life bestowed upon them by the Father as the reward of their righteousness. The patriarch Abraham enters into conference with Christ, in the conclusion of which the Saviour of the world shews him, in the glorious vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, the holy city, as described in the Apocalypse. When this beatific vision is passed away, Christ re-ascends to earth in view of the whole assembly of Saints. The angel Gabriel, who is left behind, addresses them from the mount, and expounds the purposes of the Saviour's resurrection from the dead and return to earth. Moses recapitulates the events of his life, instances the frequent rebellions of the Lord's unfaithful people, and laments their future impenitence and incredulity. Gabriel replies, and, from the nature of man's free will, explains the origin and necessity of evil, from which he deduces the benefits of Christ's death and redemption. And now the spirit of God descending on the hearts of the righteous, inspires them with all understanding and knowledge, fitted to their happy condition. A Paradise arises within the regions of Death; Gabriel addresses them for the last time, and upon his departure the Poem concludes.

CALVARY, &c.

BOOK VIII.

THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

NOW had the Saviour by the word of pow'r
Wafted the magic phantom into air,
And all the horrors of the scene dispell'd :
Swift as the stroke of his own winged dart,
Or flitting shadows by the moon-beam chas'd,
Death on the instant vanish'd : What had seem'd
A citadel of proud and martial port,
With bastions fenc'd, and pow'rs impregnable
Of adamant compos'd and lofty dome
Covering the throne imperial, now was air ; 10
And, far as eye could reach, a level plain,
In the interminable horizon lost,
Unfolded its vast champaign to the view. [rays,
Darkness, twin-born with Death, had fled ; the
That from the Saviour's sun-crown'd temples
beam'd,
With dazzling lustre brighten'd all the scene.
There, just emerging to the distant view,
And glitt'ring white, a multitude appear'd,
Stretch'd east and west in orderly array,

Swift marching underneath the mighty wings
Of the protecting angel, who in air
Soar'd imminent, and with the broad expanse
From flank to flank envelop'd all the host :
He with the blast of the awak'ning trump
Gave note of their advance. In the mid-plain
There was a mount ; thither the Saviour hied
With his cherubic guard, and there in view
Of the assembled myriads stood sublime.
The saints in order form'd themselves around,
Orb within orb, each in his proper sphere 30
Instinctively arrang'd ; then all at once,
As by one soul inspir'd, with bended knee
And forehead prostrate on the earth, they paid
Joint homage and ador'd. Oh ! who shall dare
With bold conjecture to compute the list
Of that blest multitude, or say, who first,
Who last, receiv'd the glorious All-hail,
Ye blessed of my Father ? Yet perchance,
So warranted by scripture, and so taught
By moral sage experience, we may doubt 40
If many rich, if many great or learn'd
Were of that righteous company ; be sure
The lover of this world had there no place...
He barter'd it for gold...he pass'd it off
To Belial for a perishable toy...
He sold it to a wanton : There the proud
Were brought down, and the meek and lowly
rais'd :

The conq'ror not of others but himself
 There found pre-eminence : All joy to him,
 Who rear'd the orphan, dry'd the widow's tears,
 And sought affliction in her secret haunts,
 Not for the praise of men ; and may not we,
 Born in an age when mild philanthropy
 Hath taught a better lesson to the heart—
 May not we foster a kind hope that some
 Of Pagan name were call'd, who, thro' the maze
 Of dark Idolatry, took Reason's clue,
 And found a mental avenue to God ?
 Here with the father of the faithful stood
 A host of patriarchs, prophets, judges, saints : 60
 Noah, who perfect in the time of wrath
 And righteous found, was left unto the earth
 A remnant when the waters fell from heav'n,
 And was in covenant with the Most High
 That man no more should perish by the flood :
 Moses, the faithful servant of the Lord,
 meekest, though mightiest, of the sons of men,
 And glorious in the sight of dreadful kings :
 Joshua, th' avenger of th' elect of God,
 Whose voice upon Mount Gibeon staid the sun
 In the mid-heav'n, and bade the moon stand still
 In Ajalon's dark vale, till Israel ceas'd
 From slaughter and the conq'ring sword was
 sheath'd :
 Here Samuel, in his linen ephod girt,

Thrice call'd of God, amid the foremost stood :
 He, who with Baal's priests contending, rear'd
 His rival altars and brought fire from heav'n
 To vindicate his God : The Psalmist King,
 And he at whose sick pray'r the sun went back,
 And he, surnam'd the Good : Daniel the seer,
 And they, who in the furnace walk'd unhurt ;
 All in the sacred page recorded just
 And faithful servants of the living God :
 For who can doubt the holy word of truth
 Attesting their salvation ? Yet there is
 One, who, by promise, sacredly assur'd
 Of bliss immediate, heard the glorious call
 Whilst hanging on the cross, by penitence
 And faith obtain'd from the all-gracious lips
 Of God's own Son, expiring at his side. 90
 Hail, holy congregation, elder-born
 Of righteousness and first-fruits of the grave,
 Elect unto salvation ! Hail, blest saints,
 Now cloth'd in white robes, as in your lives
 With purity, sound forth your praise to God
 And to the Lamb, in whose blood ye are wash'd ;
 Wave high your branches of victorious palm,
 Hymning the strain, which he in Patmos heard,
 What time the glorious vision was reveal'd.

" Hail, First and Last !" the immortal chorus
 sung,

100

" Of all things the beginning and the end ;

For thou art he, who livest and wast dead,
 And lo ! thou art alive for evermore,
 And hold'st in hand of hell and death the keys,
 Salvation to our God and to the Lamb
 At his right hand, who sitteth on the throne ;
 Blessing and glory, wisdom, honor, pow'r,
 Might and thanksgiving evermore to God
 And to his CHRIST ! Father, we give thee thanks,
 Lord God, who wast, and art, and art to come,
 For this thy mighty pow'r in us fulfill'd.
 Now are the kingdoms of this world become
 The kingdoms of our Lord and of his CHRIST,
 And he shall reign forever ; now thy wrath
 On the rebellious nations is let loose ;
 Now is the first call of the sleeping saints,
 And all thy servants faithful unto death
 Thou hast rewarded with eternal bliss.
 Henceforth forever blessed are the dead,
 Thus dying in the Lord, for they shall rest 120
 From labour, and their good works are not lost !"

 Their hymn perform'd, the whole redeemed
 host,

With hands uplifted and all eyes direct
 Upon the glorious Presence, bent the knee
 Silent, whilst thus the LORD OF MERCY spake :

 " Ye blessed of my Father, prophets, saints
 And martyrs ; ye of Abraham's faithful stock,
 And ye, though wild by nature, grafted in

Upon the parent tree, and bearing fruits
To life eternal, welcome to my peace ! 130

Now are your watchings and your labours past...

Your tribulations, self-denials, pains

And mournings recompens'd ; never again

Shall ye know thirst or hunger, nor the sun

Light you by day, nor yet by night the moon ;

For ye shall dwell before the throne of God,

And I will feed you : I will lead you forth

To living founts, and wipe away all tears.

Come, enter ye into your Master's joy—

Come, for the throne awaits you ; take the crown

Of glory...take the kingdom from all time

For you prepar'd...possess your happy rights,

The earnings of your charity and love :

For I was hunger'd and ye gave me meat,

Thirsty I was and ye assuag'd my thirst,

I was a stranger and ye took me in,

Naked ye cloth'd me, sick ye visited,

I was in prison and ye came unto me."

" When, Lord !" the righteous humbly inter-
pos'd,

" When were these charities by us perform'd ?

How have we merited this praise of thee,

Whom in the flesh we knew not ? Tell us, Lord,

When saw we thee an hungered and gave food ?

When thirsty and gave drink ? a stranger when

And took thee in, naked and clothed thee ;

When saw we thee in sickness or in prison
And came unto thee ? When didst thou endure
These hard necessities, or we relieve ?”

Whereto the LORD reply'd : “ Truly ye say
Me in the flesh ye knew not, yet in sp^{irit} 160
Ye knew me, for my law was in your hearts ;
And what to these my brethren ye have done,
Or to the least of these, ye did to me,
Patron of mercy and the friend of man.
To every one, but not to all alike,
Some talent is in trust, the loan of heav'n,
To husband as he may ; and he who spares
From his imparted fund wherewith to help
His neighbor's scantier dole, improves the loan
And makes his Lord his debtor. First and last,
Ere Abraham was, I am. Open your ears !
Hear, mark, and understand : The world by sin
Original had fall'n off from God ;
Man was become corrupt, idolatrous,
Abominable : SATAN reign'd on earth.
Ye are of various ages ; all have slept,
And some from earliest times or e'er the flood
Swallow'd the nations, yet with one accord
All in your several periods have bewail'd
Degenerated man : Noah can tell 180
How all the earth with violence was fill'd,
Or e'er the fountains of the vasty deep
Were broken up : Moses can well declare

How hard and to rebellion prone the hearts
 Of those whom he led forth : Samuel beheld
 A stiff-neck'd generation spurn the yoke
 And kick against their God ; but vain his voice,
 Vain all the prophets' voices, who foretold
 My coming, without whom the world were lost.
 Now is salvation come ; I've drank the cup 190
 Of bitterness, and died the death for man :
 My peace I've left on earth ; the living world,
 They have the word of truth, and by that word
 Through faith they shall be sav'd ; from them
 I came

To visit these dark regions, and redeem
 The saints who slept ; behold ! ye are alive :
 Death hath no more dominion ; SATAN, chain'd
 For ages, shall abide his time to come :
 Meanwhile in glory ye shall dwell with me ;
 By resurrection purchas'd with my blood 200
 Ye are the first-fruits of immortal life."

NOW ABRAHAM, father of the faithful band,
 And first in station nearest to the mount,
 His eyes uplifted to the face divine
 Of the effulgent Virtue, and thus spake :

" Yet once more, as aforetime in the days
 Of Sodom, suffer me to plead for man,
 And ask of thee his Saviour if these few,
 Few not in numbers, yet for heav'n too few
 And for Heav'n's mercy, seeing there are past

So many many ages of the world,
Are all that shall be sav'd? Alas, for man!
If this be the whole remnant, all the stock
Cull'd from so many myriads for God's fold.
Where are the nations vanish'd? Where are the
hosts,

That sea, earth, flood and fire have swallow'd up?
Can hell contain them? Can devouring Death
Find stomach for them all? Did God make man
For death and hell, or thou endure the cross
Only for us? Are all the righteous shrunk 220
To this small measure? And, if these be all,
Are they not yet enough to save the rest,
If heav'nly mercy listen to our prayer?
May not our righteousness so save a world
From wrath, as once the righteousness of five
Had sav'd a guilty city from its fate?"

To him the LORD OF MERCY: "I have said
Ye are the first fruits by my blood obtain'd,
The earnest of redemption: I have bruis'd,
Not crush'd the Serpent's head; he shall arise
Out of the pit once more to vex the earth.
Death, the last enemy, is not destroy'd,
Yet is his sceptre shorten'd, and the key
That opens into life, now in those hands,
Where mercy best can place it for man's good:
Thus of all pow'r though Death is not bereft,
Yet I have shook his throne, with inroad deep

Pierc'd his dark realm, and you redeeming
thence,

Made tenantless your graves, his strongest holds.
With you when from this depth I reascend, 240
And through heav'n's golden portal lead my
host

Of Saints high-waving these victorious palms,
Your white robes glitt'ring in God's starry courts,
Great sure will be the triumph, loud th' acclaim,
When all my Father's Angels shall sound forth
Their joyful hallelujahs round his throne.

Enough for victory hath been achiev'd ;
Destruction is reserv'd to that great day,
When the compelling angel shall go forth
To gather every atom of man's dust, 250

Which the seas cover, or the earth contains :
Then shall all souls be judg'd ; if Abraham then,
When of all hearts the secrets shall be known,
Then if the friend of God hath aught to urge
In mitigation of man's guilt, be sure,
Ere justice strike, mercy will hear the plea.
Of this no more. The seasons and the times
Are with the Father : the dread hour draws on.
But I must first re-visit those on earth
Whom I have left in sorrow ; for their sakes
I must again submit me to the flesh,
And by the evidence of sense confirm
My promis'd resurrection ; this perform'd,

And immortality reveal'd to man,
By faith made sure, my gospel shall go forth :
My office then the Comforter will take ;
The weak he shall make strong, the foolish wise,
And by the mouths of sucklings and of babes
He shall confound the wisdom of the world,
And o'er the gates of hell erect my Church."

When thus the Patriarch, glowing still with
zeal

For man's salvation, further question urg'd :

" Lord, will not then the faithless world be-
lieve,

When thou return'st with glory? From the dead
When they behold thee visible on earth
And thence to heav'n ascending, can they doubt?
Such revelation can their eyes resist—

Their ears such truth recorded? Shall there then
Be left a Gentile idol upon earth

To rival Israel's God? Shall there not be 280
One Shepherd and one fold for all mankind...

One faith...one baptism...one LORD and CHRIST?

But I perhaps too bold offend thine ear

With my rude converse ; Lord, if so, command
My tongue to silence ; yet not in thy wrath,
Not in thy wrath, O Lord, reprove my zeal."

Whereto the Saviour mildly thus reply'd :

" O Abraham, in whose soul compassion glows
And love, that burns with zeal for all thy sons,

Nor for thy sons alone, but the whole world, 290
Whose advocate thou art, think not the tongue,
That speaks for mercy, can offend my ear :
Yet what thy zeal anticipates in time
Is distant far ; ages must roll betwixt
Thy hope and its completion ; threat'ning clouds
Loom on the glorious prospect ; seas of blood
Must first be pass'd ; long pilgrimage and sad
My martyrs have to make through valleys dark,
Where ign'rance shades the sun, through fright-
ful haunts,

Where superstition pictures out the scene 300
In monstrous forms, and worships what it dreads.
Painful their march and round beset with snares ;
Here treach'ry lurks...there persecution flames ;
Before them infidelity....behind
Reproach and slander and the roar of tongues
Contentious, urging them to turn from God
And waste their nobler zeal in vain dispute.
Thus, step by step, in righteousness and faith
Arm'd at all points, my servants militant
Shall win their way, and what they earn enjoy.
Lowly and meek I came into the world,
And meek and lowly I shall now return ;
Not with that glory rising from the grave,
Which for my second coming is reserv'd,
But in that mortal body which they pierc'd,
Shewing my wounds ; not with the proud display

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 259

Of one who courts the voice of public fame,
But communing apart with those I left
To be my witnesses, that so through them
Men may be taught by reason to discern 320
Not what they must, but what they should believe ;

Not by the evidence of sense to feel,
But by the mind's conviction to perceive
Truth in its argument, not act ; and build
On reason, not necessity, their faith,
And on their faith and their good works their
hope.

God will not always struggle with mankind—
Heap proof on proof till incredulity
Though blind must see, tho' deaf of force must
hear ;

He will not bring his heav'n upon the earth, 330
Rather will lead man's heart from earthly things
To reach at heav'nly joys ; the railing Jews
Who fix'd me to the cross, bade me come down,
And with the sign of pow'r dispel their doubts :
So had I frustrated all faith at once,
And with all faith all virtue : I was dumb...
I open'd not my mouth to their reproach...
I stirr'd not from the cross...I died the death,
Nor to my rescue brought one angel down,
Though legions waited to obey my call. 340
And now none other sign will I vouchsafe

But of the prophet Jonas ; for as he
From out the belly of the whale emerg'd
On the third day, so I from out the tomb,
In the same body, will come forth on earth
With the third morning's dawn ; thus shall the
word

Of prophecy by my disciples heard,
Not understood, be perfected in me,
And I will breathe my sp'rit into their hearts
To comprehend all scriptures, and to preach 350
Me crucified ; nor shall there be a dearth
Of witnesses to publish and attest
My resurrection ; hundreds shall behold
My substance in the flesh, and he that doubts
Shall touch me and believe. More to expound
There needs not ; this in all your ears aloud
I now promulgate, that when I am gone
Ye may abide the interim in peace,
By terror or impatience undisturb'd ;
And now not many are the days to pass, 360
Ere to the heav'n of heav'n's I shall ascend,
And there in blest communion with my saints,
Made perfect after death, for ever dwell
At the right hand of pow'r ; meanwhile the seed
Which I have sown, though of all grains the least,
Yet water'd by the comforter shall grow
Of herbs the greatest, and become a tree,
Within whose branches all the birds of air

Shall come and lodge; so shall my kingdom rise
 From mean beginning into mighty growth, 370
 A still small current, spreading as it goes ;
 For in the arm of man I place no strength,
 Nor in the battle's thunder can be heard [ear,
 His voice that preacheth peace ; to storm the
 Like those loud heathen orators, who shake
 The forum with their eloquence, ill suits
 The servants of a master little vers'd
 In this world's wisdom, and not vain of speech :
 In love, in calm persuasion, and in peace,
 My gospel I have planted : Woe to them, 380
 Who in the place of these sweet fruits provoke
 The baneful growth of persecution, strife,
 And discord in my Church, op'ning my wounds
 Unheal'd, and crucifying me afresh." [thanks
 To him the Patriarch : " Lord, we give thee
 For that thou hast imparted to thy saints
 These tidings of great joy, though distant far,
 And through such clouds of sorrow dimly seen ;
 And sure we are thy gospel shall prevail,
 Yet much do we lament for what thy saints 390
 And martyrs have to suffer upon earth,
 Foil'd by that first deceiver of mankind, [chain'd,
 Who, though now bruis'd, and for awhile en-
 Shall yet come forth to vex thy holy Church,
 To conjure up false prophets, and pervert
 Thy fol'wers, who are taught to live in peace

And charity with all men : But we know
 God did not build this goodly frame of things
 For SATAN to destroy, and he and Death [home,
 Shall have an end : Heav'n is man's natural
 And righteousness the impulse of his heart ;
 Nor will God fail his promise, that in me
 And in my seed the whole world shall be blest :
 Ah ! when shall I behold that promis'd day ?
 When shall I see the warring world at peace ?
 When shall my Israel, scatter'd o'er the earth
 And straggling wide, hear their good Shepherd's
 call,

And come into his fold ? Sure that blest voice,
 That glorious vision would be heav'n itself."

"That vision thou shalt see," the LORD reply'd,
 "And smil'd all-gracious on th' enraptur'd Saint,
 From this prospective mount with purged eye,
 'That through the length'ning tract of time dis-
 cerns

Futurity remote, thou shalt behold
 Th' Apocalypse, which to no living eye,
 Save of my servant John, I shall disclose :
 But know ere this blest period shall arrive,
 'The elements must melt with fervent heat,
 And earth and sea and heav'n must pass away,
 Darkness and sin and death shall be no more,
 And a new world shine forth. Ascend the mount,
 And eastward turning tell me what thou seest :"

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 263

“ I see,” the Patriarch cry’d, “ an heav’n and
earth...

Earth without sea, and heav’n without a cloud,
All bright and glist’ning from the Maker’s
hands :

I see descending from the throne of God
Jerusalem the Holy City, new,
Deck’d like a bride for her celestial spouse :
Order, and grace, and symmetry conspire
In all her parts, and with the rich display 430
Of vivid gems make glorious her attire :
To the four points of heav’n in equal span
She stretches out her many-colour’d walls,
Celestial masonry, whose meanest stone,
More rare and precious than the brightest gem
Of earthly diadems, transparent flames,
From the foundations to the topmost cope
Of mural battlement one dazzling blaze
Of glorious jewelry, and then amidst
On every flank quadrangular three gates, 440
Each of an orient pearl, to our twelve tribes,
By number and by name appropriate,
Stand open, guarded by cherubic watch ;
Through whose unfolded portals I descry
A city all of purest gold, and clear
As the unclouded crystal on whose towers
God’s all-sufficient glory sheds a flood
Of radiance brighter than the borrow’d beam

Of shadowy moon or sun oft wrapt in clouds,
Making alternate night and day on earth : 450
But night is here unknown ; day needeth not
To rest in darkness, nor the eye in sleep ;
Nor temple here for worship may be found,
The ever-present Deity demands
No house of pray'r ; in ev'ry heart is built
His altar—every voice records his praise,
And every saint his minister and priest.
Through the mid-street a chrystal river flows
Pellucid, welling from the throne of God,
Its living source, upon whose border springs 460
The tree of life, bearing ambrosial fruits
Monthly renew'd, and varied through the year,
Food for immortals, in whose balmy gum
And leaves medicinal, a virtue dwells
So general and potential, that no pain
Or ailment but here finds its ready cure ;
No tear shall wet this consecrated soil,
Nor feud, nor clamor, nor unholy curse
Disturb these peaceful echoes ; here the saints
In sweet harmonious brotherhood shall dwell,
Serene and perfect in the sight of God.
And hark ! I hear seraphic voices chaunt
To their melodious harps the bridal hymn—
Now is our God espoused to his Church,
And from their heav'nly union are gone forth,
Blessing and peace and joy to all mankind ;

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 265

Now shall his saints eternal Sabbath keep
From death, and pain, and wailing, and complaint.

All is made new...the old is pass'd away...
Time draws aside the faded scene of things,
And Nature in immortal freshness blooms.
Now to the waters of the fount of life,
Perpetual waters, every soul may come,
And he that is athirst may freely drink:
But fire and brimstone in the burning lake
Shall be their portion, who revolt from God ;
There with the Beast in torments they shall
 dwell,
Seal'd in their foreheads with his mark, and drink
The cup of indignation to the dregs
Wrung out in anger, whilst their ceaseless cry
Shall with the smoke of the infernal pit
Day after day for evermore ascend."

No more ; for now the heav'nly vision clos'd ;
Awaken'd from his trance, the Patriarch turn'd
With grateful reverence to address the Lord
And Giver of these new-discover'd joys,
When lo ! ascending from the mount, he saw
CHRIST in a cloud of glory on the wings
Of mighty cherubim upborne in air,
High-soaring, to this orb terraqueous bound, 500
Seen over-head diminish'd to a point
Dim and opaque amid the blue serene :

His raiment whiter than the new-born light,
Struck out of chaos by the Maker's hand
In earnest of creation, sparkling blaz'd
In its swift motion, and with fiery track
Mark'd his ascent to earth ; the host of saints
With joyful loud hosannas fill'd the air :
" Glory to God on high," was all their strain,
" On the earth peace, good will to all mankind !"

Meanwhile the arch-angel GABRIEL, who yet
kept

His tutelary station on the mount, [voice
So bidd'n of CHRIST, with arm out-stretch'd, and
Commanding silence, thus the saints bespake :

" Now is your resurrection sure...your joy,
Your glory, and your triumph over death
And hell made perfect ; for behold where CHRIST
Your first-fruit now is ris'n, and waves on high
The ensign of redemption : Now he soars
Up to yon pendent world, that darkling speck,
Which in the boundless empyrean floats
Pois'd on its whirling axle ; there he liv'd
And took your mortal body....there he died,
And for your sakes endur'd the painful cross,
Giving his blood a ransom for your sins ;
Thither he goes to re-assume his flesh ;
There, when his angel ministers have op'd
The seal'd sepulchre, he shall come forth
And shew himself resurgent from the grave

To those whom he hath sanctified and call'd
To be his witnesses in all the world,
And of his resurrection after death
Their faithful evidence to seal with blood
Of martyrs and apostles, warning men
With their last breath to be baptiz'd and live ;
So shall the seed be water'd and increase,
Till all the Gentile nations shall come in
And dwell beneath its branches evermore.
Now are the gates of everlasting life
Set open to mankind, and when the Lord, 540
Captain of their salvation, shall have liv'd
His promis'd term on earth, and thence to heav'n
Ascending seat himself at God's right hand,
Then shall the Holy Ghost, the Comforter,
Rush like a mighty wind upon the hearts
Of his inspir'd apostles ; tongues of fire
And languages untaught they shall receive
To speak with boldness the revealed word,
Enduring all things for the gospel's sake ;
Troubled on every side, yet not distress'd... 550
Perplex'd, but not surrender'd to despair...
Afflicted, not forsaken, they shall be...
Cast down but not destroy'd, knowing that God,
Who rais'd the Lord Jesus from the dead,
Them also into life through him will raise,
And that the light affliction of this world,
Which is but for a moment, soon shall be

O'erpaid by a far more exceeding weight
Of joys eternal in the life to come."

He ceas'd, and all were silent wrapt in awe
Of the late glorious vision, yet in heart
Troubled for what the angel had reveal'd
Of sorrows still to come, and pains and deaths
To be encounter'd by the saints on earth ;
When now that Shepherd, who on Sinai's mount
Commun'd with God and heard creation's plan
Expounded by its Architect, thus spake :

" Oh thou, whom through the fiery cloud I
saw

On Horeb's hill, when tending Jethro's flock,
What time I heard my name twice call'd of God
In thunder from amidst the flaming bush,
Bidding me strait go forth to loose his sheep
From Egypt's captive fold, I do perceive
That I have penn'd the word of God aright,
And now in CHRIST behold the woman's seed
Bruising that Serpent's head, who wrought the
fall

Of our first parents. Forty days and nights
On Sinai's top, midst thund'rings, clouds and fire
Fasting I stood, and whilst the hallow'd ground
Trembled beneath my bare unsandal'd feet, 580
I heard an awful voice that bade me write
The glorious record of his six days' work.
Aghast, confounded, dazzled with the blaze

Of glory, still my faithful pen obey'd
The sacred dictates of an unseen God :
I wrote, and to an unbelieving world
Publish'd the wond'rous Code ; age after age
Libell'd the transcript : With the rod of pow'r
I smote the seas asunder ; Israel pass'd
Through wat'ry battlements ; forty long years
In the waste howling wilderness I fed
Their murmuring tribes with food miraculous ;
They fed, but murmur'd still : I brought them
laws

With God's own finger graven ; I came down
Bearing Jehovah's statutes in my hand
On both sides written ; impious noisy shouts,
Lewd triumphs, and vile revels smote mine ear ;
The people danc'd around a molten calf...
Monstrous idolatry ! Raging with shame
I dash'd the stony tablets on the ground, 600
And shiver'd them to fragments : God was
mock'd ;

A stiff-neck'd and a stubborn race they were,
Who from the rock of their salvation turn'd,
And sacrific'd to devils ; and behold !
Their sons have crucified the LORD OF LIFE ;
Therefore his resurrection, which shall be
Light and redemption to the Gentile world,
To them is darkness and the shadow of death ;
For they have slain the very Paschal Lamb ;

That bloody symbol of their antient law, 610
Which I made sacred, they have now made void,
And cancell'd my legation : I perceive
A new commandment is gone forth ; I see
The temple's vail is rent ; for the old law,
A carnal shadow of things spiritual,
Suffic'd not for perfection and the pow'r
Of an eternal life : CHRIST is become
That King of Salem, that immortal Priest
Of God most high, whose ministry supreme,
Before all time from heav'n itself deriv'd, 620
And not from right Levitical, removes
All title from that consecrated tribe,
Where I had fix'd it. God, who sending me,
Sent but his servant, now hath giv'n his son
More worthy of his glory ; without sin [pass'd
And spotless He, the great High Priest, hath
Into the heav'ns, victorious over Death ;
But I, whose trespasses at Meribah,
Frail, sinful man, provok'd the Lord to wrath,
Saw but the skirts of Dan from Pisgah's top, 630
Unworthy deem'd to enter that fair land,
And died upon mount Nebo. But when CHRIST,
Who hath awaken'd us from sleep, shall rise
And in his mortal flesh a second time
Visit his saints on earth, who then shall say
There is no resurrection of the dead ?
Faintly I shadow'd forth a future life ;

THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 274

I spake not to men's senses, as CHRIST speaks ;
God gave me no commission to reveal
The secrets of the grave ; corruption's worm
Spar'd not my flesh, nor came my spirit back
From Death's dark citadel, to give mankind
Conviction ocular of his defeat ;
I left him in his power till CHRIST should come
To break that sceptre, which had aw'd the world.
Much then it moves my wonder, much I grieve
That darkness shall not yet be drawn aside
From Israel, and that those, who would not hear
Me and the prophets, shall not yet believe
CHRIST their Messiah rising from the dead."

To whom th' Arch-angel answer'd, heav'nly
mild : [should doubt,
" Well may'st thou muse that reas'ning man
And cause we have to grieve, when he neglects
So great salvation ; but when CHRIST hath
shewn

What is the good and true and perfect way,
Reason must do the rest : When all are free
Some must be faithless, wilful and perverse.
God could have made his creatures void of sin,
For he can put a master in their hearts,
And govern them by instinct ; but to man 660
He gave a nobler faculty, a will...
A spark of immortality...a soul,
Reason to counsel that immortal soul,

And conscience to restrain licentious will.
Grace shall assist the humble and devout ;
A proud man hath no friend in heav'n or earth,
Renounc'd of angels, and by men abhorr'd :
Truth must be sought...it will not be impos'd :
What were that revelation, which should leave
No exercise to faith ? All men must work 670
With fear and trembling their salvation out.
God does not give free will to take away
What he hath giv'n ; if man will sin, he must :
Nor do we call them good, who cannot err,
Else brutes would claim a virtue. None is good
Save God alone ; impute we not to God.
The evil which man does, nor him arraign
For not preventing ills which he foreknows :
Angels have sinn'd, and some are fall'n from
 bliss ;
All had their days of error, their degrees 680
Of good and ill, else why have we degrees,
Ranks and precedencies of bliss in heav'n ?
Call your own lives to mind ; ye have been men,
Your failings many, yet your virtues more ;
Why are ye now rewarded by your God ?
Why but because those virtues were your own ?
Ye made them what they were—ye rear'd their
 growth,
Reason reform'd the wild luxuriant soil, [fruit.
Pluck'd up the weeds, and nurs'd the glorious

**Is there amongst you one that hath to boast
Human perfection ? There is none that will.
A free, yet faultless creature, would be more
Than man, than angel : nor can God create
An equal to himself...a rival God.
In Eden's happy groves when man was plac'd,
One interdicted, baneful plant there was,
Tempting and rich in fruit ; all else was good,
Fair to the eye and wholesome to the taste ;
Yet of that fruit man pluck'd, and eat, and died ;
Tempted he was, but not compell'd to take ; 700
Warn'd to abstain, no angel stopp'd his hand,
No thund'ring voice deterr'd him from the deed,
For man was free ; so could he not have been,
Had God's foreknowledge over-rul'd his will.
Thus Sin had origin, and Death began
His occupation with the human race,
More terrible for that he came with pangs,
Horrors, and doubts on sin-oppressed man,
When conscience wrung him in the parting hour.
But still the inextinguishable soul 710
Mock'd at Death's dart....the body was his own
From the beginning ; of the earth 'twas made...
The earth it till'd, and from the earth it fed ;
A tenement of dust was never form'd
For immortality ; and now, behold,
Adam, the earthly man, in whom all die,
Is buried to the world ; redemption brings**

The day-spring of Salvation from on high,
 CHRIST in his glory comes, the Lord from heav'n,
 And who in him have faith, in him have life."

He ceas'd, when now th' assembly of the saints,
 Who, whilst he spake, stood in their orbs un-
 mov'd

Circling the mount, 'gan to feel the Sp'rit of God
 Descending on their hearts, and, like a sea
 By secret currents from its bottom stirr'd,
 Wav'd to and fro their undulating files
 Wide and more wide, as with a mighty wind
 The heav'nly inspiration on them rush'd :

This GABRIEL heard, and from the mount came
 down,

Which quak'd beneath his feet, whilst over-head
 Loud thund'rings announc'd the coming God :
 And now a fire, that cover'd all the mount,
 Bespoke him present ; all the air respir'd
 Ambrosial odours, amaranth and rose,
 For Nature felt her God, and every flower
 And every fragrant shrub, whose honied breath
 Perfumes the courts of heav'n, had burst to life
 Blooming, and, in a thousand colours dy'd,
 Threw their gay mantle o'er the naked heath.
 Now glow'd the living landscape ; hill and dale
 Rose on the flat, or sunk as Nature shap'd
 Her loveliest forms and swell'd her wavy line,
 Leaving unrein'd variety to run
 Her wild career amid the sportive scene :

Nor were there wanting trees of every growth,
Umbrageous some, making a verdant tent
Under their spreading branches, some of shaft
Majestic, tow'ring o'er the subject groves :
Blossoms and fruits and aromatic gums [leaves ;
Scented the breeze that fann'd their rustling
And them betwixt a chrystal river flow'd
O'er golden sands, meand'ring in its course
Through amaranthine banks, with lulling sound
Of dulcet murmurs, breathing soft repose.

Thus at the sight of God spontaneous rose
A Paradise within the realm of Death,
Where that blest congregation might abide
Their LORD's return, now visitant on earth :
And now th' Eternal having breath'd his joy
Into their hearts, and giv'n them to discern 760
All knowledge, that befitted souls so blest,
Withdrew his presence from the flaming mount ;
Whereat the min'st'ring Angel who beheld
Salvation's work complete, thus parting spake :

“ God, in whose presence pleasure ever dwells,
Hath for your dear Redeemer's sake bestow'd
These joys, and now his presence is withdrawn ;
Yet hath he left his spirit in your hearts,
'To teach you all that is and is to be :
Behold, the cloud that veil'd your mortal eyes
Is drawn aside, and what as in a glass
Darkling ye saw, now face to face is seen :
Ye now discern the ways of God how just,

How true, how wise, how perfect in design,
 And well ye know that man, presumptuous man,
 In a vain shadow walketh ; ye perceive
 His boasted mind sufficient for the things,
 That to his own salvation appertain ;
 Yet when it scans the mysteries of heaven,
 How false, how weak, how daringly absurd ! 780
 Firm faith, warm charity, and humble hope,
 These are the Christian graces...these the guides
 That lead to life eternal ; thoughts perverse,
 Pert quibbling follies, publish'd in the pride
 Of false philosophy, are dev'lish arts,
 That damn the instrument, who thus attempts
 To hide the light of revelation's beam
 From weaker eyes, and turn the world from God ;
 These verily shall have their just reward :
 And now no more ; this Paradise ye see 790
 Is but your passage to a brighter scene—
 A resting-place till CHRIST shall re-ascend
 To the right hand of God, and call you hence
 To share his glory in the heav'n of heavens."

He said, and swifter than the meteor's glance,
 Sprung on the wing to seek his native sphere :
 The Saints look'd up, then sung with joint acclaim,
 " Glory to God, and praises to his CHRIST,
 Judge and Redeemer of the quick and dead !"

7

END OF THE POEM.



7

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